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Racial Uplift and Self-Determination: The African Methodist Episcopal Church and its Pursuit of Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

RACIAL UPLIFT AND SELF-DETERMINATION: THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND ITS PURSUIT OF HIGHE EDUCATION

by
Shannon A. Butler-Mokoro

The African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, like many historically black denomination over the years, has been actively involved in social change and racial uplift. The concepts of racial uplift and self-determination dominated black social, political, and economic thought throughout the late-eighteenth into the nineteenth century. Having created many firsts for blacks in America, the A.M.E. Church is recognized as leading blacks in implementing the rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination. Racial uplift was a broad concept that covered issues such as equal rights, moral, spiritual, and intellectual development, and institutional and organizational building. The rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination help to create many black leaders and institutions such as churches, schools, and newspapers.

This is a historical study in which I examined how education and educational institutions sponsored by a black church can be methods of social change and racial uplift. The A.M.E. Church was the first black institution (secular or religious) to create, support, and maintain institutions of higher education for blacks. I explored the question of why before slavery had even ended and it was legal for blacks to learn to read and write, the A.M.E. Church became interested in and created institution of learning. I answer this question by looking at the creation of these institutions as the A.M.E.

Church's way of promoting and implementing racial uplift and self-determination. This examination includes the analysis of language used in articles, sermons, and speeches given by various A.M.E. Church-affiliated persons who promoted education as a method to uplift the Negro race.

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by
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in
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is natural to expect that a historian will write of his [or her] chosen period of time and thought “con amore.” For it would be a sad task to devote many years of a meager human life to the study of men, minds, actions and achievements that were devoid of the glitter and pull of deep human significance.¹

This is the story of why and how the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church created institutions of higher education.² To write a dissertation about the educational work of the A.M.E. Church is a daunting task. If I had unlimited time and resources I would venture to write a detailed history chronicling the first 100 years of each of the A.M.E. Church affiliated colleges. Time and resources, however, are limited and the constraints of dissertation work have led me to focus my research on the underlying motivations and reasons for the A.M.E. Church’s involvement in higher

¹ Adrienne Koch, *The American Enlightenment: The Shaping of the American Experiment and a Free Society* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1965), 19.

² Generally, higher education (also referred to as post-secondary education) refers to education provided by vocational institutions, technical schools, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and universities. This education typically comes after the completion of high school or the earning of a general education degree (GED). The modern purposes of higher education have been broadly defined as teaching, research, and service. Many of the institutions of higher education founded for blacks were not initially called colleges or universities. Many of these early institutions were called institutes or academies. An explanation for the difference in title will be given in chapter two. See Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1962); Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri S. Murty *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1993); and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications>.

education. Several authors before me have also ventured down a similar road.³ My research, and thus my dissertation, differs from these other dissertations and theses in that I focus solely on the A.M.E. Church and its efforts in establishing institutions of higher education, and in that I explore in depth the A.M.E. Church's philosophy on the importance of education as a means of implementing racial uplift and self-determination. As will be explained in a separate chapter these two ideals predominated the social and political thinking of blacks in America throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Therefore, the focus of my dissertation begins in the early eighteenth century and goes through the late nineteenth century.⁴ My concluding premise is that the A.M.E. Church created institutions of higher education as a way to promote and implement the ideals of racial uplift and self-determination.

³ Some of the dissertations written about the A.M.E. Church and its educational work include: Mark Tyler Kelly, "Bishop Alexander Payne of the African Methodist Episcopal Church: The Life of a Nineteenth Century Educational Leader, 1811-1865" (Ph.D. diss., University of Dayton, 2006); Constella Hines Zimmerman, "Contributions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its Leadership to Higher Education for Adult African-Americans during the Late Nineteenth Century: 1865-1890" (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers State University, 1998); Joseph McMillan, "The Development of Higher Education for Blacks during the Late Nineteenth Century: A Study of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Wilberforce University; The American Missionary Association, Hampton Institute; and Fisk University" (Ed.D. diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1986); Grace Naomi Perry, "The Educational Work of the A.M.E. Church Prior to 1900" (master's thesis, Howard University, 1948); and Serena C. Wilson "Haven For All Hungry Souls: The Influence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools on Morris Brown College" (Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 2008).

⁴ I specifically attempt to concentrate the research for my dissertation between 1787, which is the year the Free African Society was formed (which later became the A.M.E. Church) and 1888, which is Wilberforce University's twenty-fifth year of existence under A.M.E. control. I chose these years because they seemed to provide the most complete picture of the A.M.E. Church's work towards racial uplift and self-determination.

Statement of Purpose and Significance

The idea for this dissertation came to me while sitting in the “Race, Class, and Gender” course in the spring of 2000. One of my classmates was eloquently reading her paper on the affiliation of the Atlanta University Center.⁵ In her paper she mentioned the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its colleges. I thought to myself that the fact that the A.M.E. Church was involved in higher education was interesting.

Embarrassingly enough I had been a member of the A.M.E. Church practically all my life and never knew the Church owned and operated any institutions of education. After some precursory research I decided that writing about the A.M.E. Church affiliated colleges would be more interesting to me and more significant to the fields of higher education, religion, and African American history than my initial topic of student protest movements. I initially had no idea what the focus of the dissertation would be; I only knew that the research would revolve around the A.M.E. colleges. As I will explain throughout the dissertation there are many aspects that made the A.M.E. colleges stand apart from the other historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). It is these unique aspects and the fact that Wilberforce University, the A.M.E. Church’s first institution of higher education, is generally considered the first institution of higher education created by and for blacks in the United States that led me to pursue this project fully.⁶

⁵ This paper which my classmate read in class led to her dissertation. Vida L. Avery, “A Fateful Hour in Black Higher Education: The Creation of the Atlanta University System” (Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 2003).

⁶ Wilberforce, founded in 1856, is the first college or university created by blacks for blacks, but not the first black college. Cheyney University in Pennsylvania, which was founded in 1837 as the African Institute, is the first historically black college or university. As I mentioned in the first footnote, the titles given to institutions by their

Small, private colleges and especially small, private, church-affiliated colleges have historically found themselves in difficulties that often threaten to close their doors.⁷ This is especially true for small, private, church-affiliated historically black colleges.⁸ The difficulties are often so complex and multi-dimensional that it makes many opponents of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) question why these institutions remain open. As I looked at the turbulent and troubled history of these small schools I wondered why they even attempted to open their doors in the first place. I became particularly interested in the colleges established and operated by the A.M.E. Church. I began writing this dissertation while living in Atlanta, Georgia and attending an African Methodist Episcopal Church. My concern went beyond scholarly curiosity and at times took on a personal aspect that spurred critical investigation.

founders can lead to misperceptions of which institutions were actually offering college-level courses at what time. For purposes of this dissertation, I use the designations of the institutions given by the founders and only in specific instances give concern to whether or not college-level course were being offered or not.

⁷ Karla Haworth, "Saint Menard College to Close Next Year," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 43, no. 36 (May 1997): A32; and Paul Fain, "Antioch College Announces it Will Close its Doors," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 54, no. 27 (March 14 2008): A15. Also see Henry N. Drewry and Humphrey Doermann, *Stand and Prosper: Private Black Colleges and Their Students* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), Chapter 7 "Two Decades of Desegregation," 99-126.

⁸ When I began writing this dissertation the A.M.E. Church had five four-year colleges and one two-year college (details about each college are forthcoming). As I prepare to defend this dissertation, the A.M.E.'s two-year college (Shorter) was taken over by the University of Arkansas – No author, "Shorter College Loses Accreditation" *Chronicle of Higher Education* 44 (April 1998): A8. Morris Brown in Atlanta, GA has lost accreditation and reopened with a changed focus and curriculum and there have been several articles predicting the closing or marveling at the resilience of other A.M.E. Colleges (No author, "Edward Waters College Loses Accreditation Appeal, Files Lawsuit," *Black Issues of Higher Education* 22 (March 2005): 11; and Katherine S. Mangan, "On New Campus in Dallas, Troubled Paul Quinn College Faces Continuing Struggle," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 39 (November 1992): A31.

The A.M.E. Church has sponsored the most colleges and universities of any of the predominantly black denominations⁹ and has also been at the forefront of small college woes, with the problems of Morris Brown College making *Chronicle of Higher Education* and local (Georgia) news headlines.¹⁰ Given the modern day challenges and struggles, I wondered, despite being unable to foresee a troublesome future, why did the A.M.E. Church become involved in establishing institutions of higher education? More specifically, why was education important to the A.M.E. Church and its leaders (many of whom were not literate themselves)? What prompted the first independent black church, still a relatively young denomination, to decide that even before the end of slavery, black people needed an institution of higher learning? Through historical analysis, I contend that the early form (purpose, structure, and curriculum) of the A.M.E. colleges served a

⁹ Between 1856 and 1890 the A.M.E. Church established seven colleges, not including theological seminaries. Two of these colleges were two-year institutions (none of which exist today) and five were four-year institutions. Throughout their existence they have each suffered from accreditation and financial woes, some have closed their doors, and some have changed their curriculum in an effort to remain solvent. These are problems common to HBCUs and small private and often church-affiliated predominantly white institutions (PWI) as well. One example of a PWI that struggled to remain open is Trinity College, a women's Catholic college in Vermont that closed its doors in 2000 and then was purchased by the University of Vermont.

¹⁰ Morris Brown College, founded in 1885, as "the only institution in Georgia founded by African American for African Americans" has undergone a major restructuring, losing its accreditation and being under harsh public scrutiny. While still open and operating the college has drastically changed its course offerings and focus. Morris Brown College website, <http://www.morrisbrown.edu> (accessed January 29, 2009). Also see Serena Wilson Walker's Ph.D. dissertation "Haven For All Hungry Souls: The Influence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools on Morris Brown College."

relevant and necessary purpose – that of promoting self-determination and racial uplift – during the 1800s.¹¹

While there are some books that have been written about the A.M.E. Church in the United States and abroad, there have not been any studies conducted on the discourse underlying the creation of its institutions of higher education.¹² Through the literature search and review process I did not find the story of the A.M.E. colleges fully documented. The majority of A.M.E. college histories are short in-house publications written by the college's historian, president, or a faculty member.¹³ There is no comprehensive study on the colleges done by someone not affiliated with the colleges or the Church. The story of the A.M.E. Church colleges is significant because of the men¹⁴

¹¹ The concepts of racial uplift and self-determination are defined and are the focus of Chapter One in this dissertation.

¹² The dissertations and theses written on the A.M.E. Church and education are given in footnote one of this introductory chapter. Other books written on the A.M.E. Church that are not focused on education, but mention the Church's efforts in establishing colleges include: Stephen W. Angell and Anthony B. Pinn, eds., *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1862-1939* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000); James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Lawrence Little, *Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism, 1884-1916* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000); and Clarence E. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land: The African Methodist Episcopal Church during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).

¹³ Examples of these institutional histories include Jane L. Ball, *After the Split: Wilberforce University Since 1947* (Naco, Arizona: SoArizonaNet, 2001); Frederick A. McGinnis, *A History and An Interpretation of Wilberforce University* (Wilberforce, Ohio, 1941); and George A. Sewell and Corneluis V. Troup, *Morris Brown College: The First Hundred Years 1881-1981* (no publication information available).

¹⁴ There were women present in the early days of the A.M.E. colleges. The women served primarily as deans for the women in the residential area or as teachers in the Home Economics department. There are no women documented as being active in the

(mostly uneducated and some illiterate) involved who created the colleges and because of the particular time in history in which this was accomplished (Wilberforce University was established before slavery ended).

The story is important because it fills a gap in the existing literature. In the end, what I hoped to discover, was two-fold: (1) that the creation of the A.M.E. colleges was driven by a quest for racial uplift and self-determination and (2) that there was consensus throughout the A.M.E. Church about creating colleges and that all involved agreed that colleges were a vital aspect of racial uplift and self-determination. By all involved I primarily mean the ministers and bishops of the A.M.E. Church. As I will show in the chapters to follow, I believe I did adequately find number one, the general philosophy and ideals of racial uplift and self-determination to be evident throughout the speeches, meetings, and documents promoting the creation of the A.M.E. colleges. But number two proved to be a disappointing yet fascinating “no,” because not everyone within the Church was fully in support of creating institutions of education. Further, by studying the reasons for the Church’s involvement in education, I hoped to add to the literature in education, African American studies, and religion. I also hoped to begin the process of creating a comprehensive history of a set of institutions whose story is important to the landscape of this country’s past and present.

establishing of the colleges or serving in leadership positions. This is a sign of that era in which women did not hold positions of leadership openly, especially not in a church or institution of higher education. “Neither black nor the white churches ordained women; the very idea of women addressing mixed assemblies ran counter to prevailing attitudes regarding women’s proper sphere....Women have historically outnumbered men in the black denominations and been more supportive of local ministries, but rarely have they occupied positions of leadership,” Jarena Lee “A Female Preacher among the African Methodists,” in Milton C. Sernett, ed., *African American Religious History: Documentary Witness* (Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1999), 164.

Methods, Modes of Inquiry, and Sources of Evidence

This dissertation utilizes historical analysis to trace important aspects of the A.M.E. Church's involvement in education. I conducted archival research at the Auburn Research Library in Atlanta, Wilberforce University in Xenia, Ohio, Boston University, Boston College, and Harvard University all in Boston, Massachusetts, the Ohio State Historical Society, and the A.M.E. Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee, analysis of the documents produced by the Church and its clergy and members as well as analysis of articles written by the Church and its clergy in various black newspapers in order to uncover how the founders of the A.M.E. Church and Wilberforce University discussed racial uplift and self-determination. I paid close attention to what was said or written and who said or wrote the stories and advocacy pieces about education within and for the A.M.E. Church.¹⁵

Historical Method: Why and How.

In all history there exists the necessity of three great points, and without these being brought forward and cleared of all superincumbent affairs which do not accord with them, no properly written history or accurate knowledge can be obtained. The first of these three points, which must be brought out clearly before the mind, is the actual facts. . . . the next point of importance is the judicial weighing of this testimony. . . . the third great question before us is the results following such a course of events. In the

¹⁵ These documents include, but are not limited to minutes from the Church annual conferences, articles and opinion pieces submitted to the *Christian Recorder* and the *AME Review*, as well as articles and opinion pieces submitted to journals such as *The Colored American*, *Frederick Douglass' Paper* and *Freedom's Journal*. Analysis of the significance of the journals will be discussed in greater detail in chapter one. I was also able to find some sermons and unpublished pamphlets that gave additional insight into the rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination by Church members, clergy, and supporters.

performance of this duty, the historian, if he will faithfully perform his duty, has no easy work before him.¹⁶

I quickly came to realize that I had no easy task before me in researching and writing this dissertation. In year two of researching and writing autonomously, with no set guidelines, deadlines, or looming final examination, I began to seriously question why on earth I had ever decided to engage in an historical dissertation. Dissertation advisor influence aside, I had to admit that somewhere deep within my heart and soul my curiosity about the past had some link to an unrealized maybe even frustrated historian waiting to be set loose. So as Daniel Payne instructed me through the writing in one of his journals, I set about to find the facts, weigh the evidence, and figure out why the facts and evidence mattered – this is what is described below as heurism, criticism, and presenting the objective truth.

Historiography begins with at least three major operations. The actual search of information is what Garraghan calls the heuristic operation. This is where and how historical writing begins. The second operation is often referred to as historical criticism and identified as a separate segment of historical research and writing; it is the analysis of the materials and sources of information collected. The third step is that of creating a formal statement of the findings based on heurism and criticism and presenting them “in terms of objective truth and significance.”¹⁷ In my research and writing I have employed heurism, criticism, and will address the issue of objectively shortly.

¹⁶ Daniel Payne’s introductory reflections and thoughts on the historian’s task recorded the beginning of the Church’s history. Daniel Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 1.

¹⁷ Gilbert J. Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1946), 3. I reference Gilbert Garraghan because he continues to be cited

The reasons for engaging in historical research are similar to some of the various types of history.¹⁸ Initially historians claim to value the study of the past for its own sake.¹⁹ These historians are referred to as antiquarians. Historical research can also serve a “liberating function”²⁰ which is similar to didactic history in that it strives to learn from past mistakes or create information about past events in order to avoid duplicating present or future errors. Also similar to using history as a teaching tool (the didactic purpose of historical research), a third purpose of historical research is to “provide a moral framework for understanding the present.”²¹ This purpose is especially true and relevant for religious and ethnic groups.

Revisionist historians engage in historical research for the purpose of finding evidence that will support current effort for change. The goal is to “sensitize educators to past practices that appear to have had unjust aims and effects, but that have continued into the present, and thus require reform.”²² Along with the aim of reform, revisionist

as an expert in the area of defining and using historical method. Most of the more recent books on historical method cite Garraghan.

¹⁸ Marius and Garraghan identify at least five different types of history or five different ways of presenting an historical record: description, narrative, didactic, exposition, and argument. Richard Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing about History* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1999) and Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method*.

¹⁹ Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

²⁰ Meredith Gall, Walter Borg, and Joyce Gall, *Educational Research: An Introduction* 6th ed. (White Plains, New York: Longman Publishers, 1996), 647.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 647.

²² *Ibid.*, 647.

historians also attempt to tell the stories of those whose stories have not been told or have not been told accurately. This is one of my purposes with this dissertation.

Within the discipline of history, concerns have arisen about the lack of representation of oppressed groups in historical accounts. Scholars who took on the revision of history to represent those voices that had been traditionally overlooked created a movement in history known as *new social history*. Historians are now experiencing what has been termed the *linguistic turn* in their discipline. In the field of history the term *linguistic turn*, denotes the historical analysis of representation as opposed to the pursuit of a discernible, retrievable historical 'reality.'²³

Finally, another reason for engaging in historical research is to define, evaluate, and analyze. This is similar to expository history, which can be useful for creating educational policy. Expository history explains and analyzes. Using some inferential reasoning, expositions attempt to explain the why of events. Together didactic and exposition serve to provide political, social, and moral lessons and shape precedents for future conduct.

Maybe because I have an eclectic style or maybe because of the different directions that the literature and primary sources have taken me, all of the reasons discussed for engaging in historical research and analysis appeal to me. I could embrace and claim each one. I value the history of the A.M.E. Church and its colleges for their own sake. The history is rich with pioneering efforts that set the stage for many other organizations and activities to come. However, dissertations must answer some question or address some problem, so I cannot write simply for the sake of writing, at least not in this context. While on some level I also believe that my dissertation could possibly assist current leaders to learn from the past, it is not my goal to engage in revisionist or

²³ Donna M. Mertens, *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998), 195.

liberation historical analysis. It would be great if something I found could assist the A.M.E. colleges in maintaining financial solvency and accreditation. But in the end my aim is more didactic and expository. I am analyzing the written documents and speeches and attempting to explain why the A.M.E. Church created institutions of higher education.

How researchers engage in historiography is partly predicated on distinguishing history as a science.²⁴ Stemming from the influence of the German university and its tenets of rigorous research and scholarship, history developed “hallmarks of critical history” and “characteristics of a competent historian.”²⁵ While Barzun and Graff wrote that “no one can tell another person what kind of historian to be”²⁶ there are, however, definite ideal characteristics a historian should possess in order to be able to be considered competent or at least to give the impression that his or her research was conducted in an acceptable manner. These ideals include: a zeal for truth; accuracy; logic; honesty; sound critical judgment; objectivity; self-awareness; and industry, which includes perseverance, patience, concentration, and organization (love of order). While from time to time I gain or lose one of these attributes, I found objectivity to be the most elusive and problematic. Objectivity was the most problematic for me because I was and am still connected to this topic on a very personal level. I grew up in the African

²⁴ Garraghan identifies four elements as being integral to the concept of science: (a) a body of systemized knowledge; (b) an effective method; (c) a definite subject matter; (d) the formulation of general truths. Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method*, 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 33-69.

²⁶ Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher* (Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992), 40.

Methodist Episcopal Church, I served on many boards within the A.M.E. Church, and even though I am no longer a member of an A.M.E. Church I still feel a strong connection to and affinity for this church. My first read of the history of the A.M.E. Church was done so with great fondness and I had to read the history and other documents at least twice more in order to be able to be more analytical and critical of them and in order to write this dissertation.

I did not choose this topic out of a desire to be objective nor do I purport to be psychologically and emotionally detached from my research and writing. My psychological and emotional investment in my research only adds to the rigor of my investigation. Garraghan wrote, “No great book has ever been or ever will be written by a historian who suppressed self as he wrote each word; what such a book may conceivably gain in accuracy it loses in spontaneity and conviction.”²⁷ I bring to this dissertation over a decade of active membership in the A.M.E. Church. I chose this topic because I had preconceived ideals about the A.M.E. Church and its participation in establishing institutions of higher education. Garraghan noted that historians will come to their research with prepossessions, prejudices, sympathy, and judgments. I come with all of the above, yet strive to not misconstrue or reinterpret the facts as they are presented in the sources of evidence.

Sources of Evidence. In all of the research books I have reviewed, two characteristics were stressed by most of the authors concerning evidence (data collection). One, it is important to use primary sources when writing an historical paper. Two, all evidence is conditioned and therefore “no piece of evidence can be used in the

²⁷ Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method*, 51.

state in which it is found . . . it must undergo the action of the researcher's mind known as the critical method."²⁸ Using sound critical judgment and logic, all sources of evidence need to be verified, questioned, and examined for what they are – an interpretation of events.

The process of evaluating historical data is referred to as historical criticism (mentioned earlier as a type of history). External criticism involves verifying the origin (author, place, date, circumstances of publication) of a historical document. Internal criticism is when the accuracy and worth of the statements within a historical document is being evaluated. The latter form of criticism is more complex and involves the historian's ideal characteristics of sound critical judgment, logic, and industry.²⁹

Primary sources include written documents (published and unpublished, private and public); works of art (photographs, paintings, sculptures, architecture); quantitative records (census data, budgets, test scores); and oral evidence (oral interviews, ballads, anecdotes, tales, sagas, and recordings). Most primary sources are found in archives of colleges, universities, museums, and historical societies. Secondary sources typically consist of books and articles. More recently the internet has been listed as a secondary

²⁸ Barzun and Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 156.

²⁹ From time to time I attempt to engage in this difficult form of criticism through the use of footnotes. I quickly found that many of the sources, even the primary sources contained some form of bias. For example, in chapter two I comment on how different historians (White European versus Negro) use different language to describe the characteristics of the African slave. I attempt to use sources that present two different perspectives on many of the issues in order to have a balanced work of research. This task proved difficult, at times frustrating, and often led to more questions than answers.

source and many historical archives now offer collections of documents, essays, images, and other related materials on-line.³⁰

The primary sources that I have used for this dissertation include books, autobiographies, pamphlets, essays, newspaper articles, sermons, and other written documents by Richard Allen, Daniel Payne, and other individuals affiliated with the A.M.E. Church in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I attempted to focus on those men who were considered to be leaders in the Church (either as a bishop or long-time serving minister) and who had written more than one document that was available, whether that was a newspaper article, opinion piece, pamphlet or sermon. One of the challenges of this project has been the fact that a good majority of the men in positions of leadership within the A.M.E. Church were either illiterate or if literate did not keep consistent written records.³¹ I am placing a great deal of weight on the few documents

³⁰ While online sources may prove problematic, especially to the antiquarian historian, one such helpful source has been a project called “Documenting the American South,” in which the University of North Carolina has obtained and scanned numerous primary documents that relate to slavery (slave narratives), the black church, Southern living during the Civil War, and oral histories of the American South. This source can be found at <http://docsouth.unc.edu>. I began retrieving information from this site in June 2005. This online secondary source is different than and more accurate and reliable than a source such as Wikipedia. DocSouth is simply a digital publishing project in which an editorial board, composed of faculty, librarians, and publishers at the University of North Carolina, works to digitally scan already existing primary documents and upload them onto the webpage, thus making them more accessible to researchers. Wikipedia (which I did not use) is not a scholarly source, it is open-content and community-built, which means that just about anyone (qualified or not) can create and post an entry on any subject available. I do not believe that any self-respecting historian would use the latter as a source of evidence.

³¹ Although Richard Allen was able to read and write, his abilities were limited and his fourteen year-old son acted as secretary for the first two A.M.E. Church conferences. Bishop Morris Brown (as were other Church leaders) was illiterate and Payne acted as his private secretary and typically the “best-educated” ministers or the sons of ministers and bishops were appointed as secretaries of the general conferences; see Daniel Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of

that can be definitively associated with Allen and Payne and using those as the foundation upon which the rationale and educational philosophy of the Church was built. This is a challenge that existed even back in 1891, when Payne was attempting to gather information in order to write the Church's history. Payne served as the Church's first historian and encountered a lack of written information, material hidden in attics or basements, and/or so destroyed by weather or time that it was not useful:

Every pamphlet, every Conference minute, Quarterly and Annual with every scrap of paper that there a ray of light upon the genesis and progress of the Connection was examined and copied, and, whenever permitted, I took possession of it. But after I had seen and gathered all available material, I perceived and recognized the fact that the materials providentially saved were both sparse and poor. ... What then could I do?³²

In addition to documents written by Church-affiliated individuals, I also used minutes from the various A.M.E. General Conference meetings and budget reports, in particular the reports given by the Secretary of Education for the A.M.E. Church.

I used other primary documents that include articles written in the Negro periodicals of the time.³³ I rely heavily on the articles found in *The Christian Recorder* and *The A.M.E. Church Review* (also the *A.M.E. Review* or the *Review*). These are the two primary periodical and journal for the A.M.E. Church. The early issues devoted a significant amount of time to promoting education and extolling the virtues of an educated ministry and educated Negro citizenry. One of the problematic matters with

the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1888), pp. 94, 111, and 220. The literacy of the A.M.E. Church leadership is discussed in greater detail in chapters three and four.

³² Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, vi.

³³ *Freedom's Journal*, *Colored American*, and the *Frederick Douglass Papers*. The significance of these sources will be discussed in chapter one.

these sources of evidence is that the articles did not always have a named author. In these cases I simply attribute the contribution to the editor of the publication who was always a minister within the Church because he was usually someone who had received a college education.

Finally, part of what many historians mean when they write about objectivity is that “historians try to tell the truth about what happened,”³⁴ or as Payne wrote, “It is his [the historian’s] obligation not only to exhibit facts as they are and occurrences as they were . . . but also to show the effects of these upon the people among whom they obtained. . . .”³⁵ This means that in addition to the primary evidence, the researcher should utilize evidence that presents a view that contradicts the premise of the study. This is important because not presenting all sides of a story will cause knowledgeable readers to conclude that I am careless, incompetent, or even dishonest. While my dissertation asserts that the establishment of colleges by the A.M.E. Church was positive for the Negro race, there is no shortage of opponents on this issue. I found many of those opposing voices through the Civil War database, which includes articles published between November 1, 1860 and April 15, 1865, from the following newspapers: *The New York Herald*, *The Charleston Mercury* and the *Richmond Enquirer*. The other primary source that had articles which did not always view Negro education or uplift favorably was the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. This newspaper was published in Philadelphia from 1728 through 1800. The creator of this database describes it as

The New York Times of the 18th century. It provides the reader with a first-hand view of colonial America, the American Revolution and the

³⁴ Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing about History*, 26.

³⁵ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 1.

New Republic, and offers important social, political and cultural perspectives of each of the periods. Thousands of articles, editorials, letters, news items and advertisements cover the Western Hemisphere, from the Canadian Maritime Provinces, through the West Indies and North and South America, presenting a detailed glimpse of issues and lifestyles of the times.³⁶

There is an issue with objectivity however, even within the Church documents. In Payne's church history there is evidence that the Church suppressed any documentation or written accounts of events that were not fully approved by the connection (The term connection refers to the Church's philosophical structure that all local churches are connected to the larger A.M.E. body, with the bishops serving as the chief officers of the connection. The structure of the Church is further discussed in chapter two). As is documented later in the dissertation, the Church ensured that its meetings and documents were kept secret and not released unless permission was given.³⁷ There is only one historical document that I am aware of that was published, which the church did not approve of.³⁸ In the proceedings of some of the early conference meetings there are resolutions passed regarding the issue of unauthorized documentation and speaking. This

³⁶ Accessible Archives is the database from which these newspapers were retrieved. This database allows a researcher to search online for full-text eighteenth and nineteenth century articles only previously available on microfilm. Along with the issue of authors not always being identified, there is also the fact that because I typically accessed the newspapers through this database, there are often no page numbers available to use in the footnotes.

³⁷ At the very first Church conference a doorkeeper was appointed and instructed to not let anyone leave or enter unless approved. It was also resolved that the minutes taken should not be shown to anyone outside of the conference. Daniel A. Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 393-394.

³⁸ Noah Calwell W. Cannon, *A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Only One in the United States of America, Styled Bethel* (Rochester, New York: Strong and Dawson Printers, 1842). Because Cannon did not receive permission from the Church to publish this work it was not considered authoritative.

creates a problem for the primary sources I utilize simply for the fact that it is probable that anything produced had to be approved by the Church (most definitely the contributions to the *Christian Recorder* and *A.M.E. Review*) and that being the case, these documents and the message(s) they convey are more likely to be positively skewed than objectively presented. It is an issue I grapple with as I add my own critical analysis to these sources.³⁹

Content

The dissertation is divided into four chapters, not including this introduction. In chapter one the concepts of racial uplift and self-determination are introduced and defined according to the rhetoric of the time. The rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination is then connected to the Church's educational philosophy. I discuss the concepts of racial uplift and self-determination in general and the various ways in which these ideals were implemented throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Particular attention is given to the role of the Negro church in promulgating these ideals.⁴⁰ Chapter two is an historical overview of the Negro Church and the Negro

³⁹ One of the most problematic issues I found among the primary sources is that of inconsistency. Not all of the authors of the primary documents concur on dates; this is particularly evident when reading descriptions of when and where the A.M.E. Church was actually founded or when Wilberforce University was founded. I decided to use as my guide what I determined to be the three most reliable primary sources in terms of dates – Richard Allen's autobiography, Daniel Payne's autobiography, and Daniel Payne's history of the A.M.E. Church.

⁴⁰ There are many scholars who have written about the predominating philosophy for blacks of racial uplift and self-determination during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many individuals and organizations espoused these ideals. I attempt to concentrate my dissertation between 1787 and 1888 (the year the Free African Society was established through twenty-five years after Wilberforce was first completely under A.M.E. control). I also attempt to utilize the newspapers, magazines, and journals edited

College. This chapter provides the origins and cultural significance of black religion and black education in the United States. It is my contention that in order to understand an institution and its philosophies, we must also understand its most prominent members.

Chapter three provides historical background on the establishment of the A.M.E. Church and details the philosophical ideology of the Church's founder, Richard Allen. Allen's particular views on education and his interpretation of racial uplift and self-determination is discussed. Because of his unique position as the first minister and Bishop of the A.M.E. Church and because of his pioneering work for the independent black church movement and other social and political causes, the words, work, and life of Allen are highlighted as the standard upon which the rest of the A.M.E. Church's works and philosophies are built. Chapter three also sets the foundation for the role of the Negro Church in the eighteenth and nineteenth century lives of blacks in the United States.

Chapter four focuses on Daniel Payne and the A.M.E. Church's initial efforts in the pursuit for establishing educational institutions. Payne's thoughts on racial uplift and self-determination are highlighted. Focus on Payne is given because he was the Church's first historian, was literate and kept consistent records, his words are documented in publications outside of the A.M.E. Church, and because he is considered to be the founder and first president of Wilberforce University under A.M.E. control. In many ways Payne carried the torch that Allen lit. In this chapter I present the Church's educational philosophy, which I believe Payne created, based upon what was written in

and written by blacks, in particular those by the black clergy, in order to more narrowly focus the way the ideals of racial uplift and self-determination relate to the A.M.E. Church and its pursuit of higher education.

the various Church periodicals and spoken in sermons. This chapter is also an attempt to show how through the curriculum and the individuals present at Wilberforce University, the A.M.E. Church was able to implement the ideals of racial uplift and self-determination in an educational setting.

The focus on Wilberforce University is due to the fact that it was the first college established by the A.M.E. Church and has the most extensive and readily available information for purposes of this dissertation. This was probably one of the most difficult chapters to research and write. Many of the early college catalogs that detail the curriculum are missing, so much of the information regarding the curriculum came from the Church history and from budget reports and random articles that alluded to or mentioned the course offerings at a particular college. One of the issues that came up in this process is the definition of a college or university and how that definition changed nationwide, but also how black institutions of education had a different perspective on higher education. This issue is discussed in chapter two.

I by no means purport to present the only view on how and why the A.M.E. Church established colleges or on what the Church's position was on racial uplift and self-determination during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As I mentioned there have been works that discuss the A.M.E. Church's educational efforts. There are also a few works that look at the Church and at individual A.M.E. ministers and their work towards racial uplift and self-determination.⁴¹ I contend that my research presents an

⁴¹ Some of these works are: Stephen Angell, "Henry McNeal Turner and the Black Religion in the South, 1865-1900" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1988); "Ransom on Race: The Radical and Social Thought of Reverdy Cassius Ransom – Preacher, Editor and Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1861-1959" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1988); and David Willis, "Aspects of Social Thought in

addition to the literature in that there are no works that focus specifically on the A.M.E. Church and its efforts to establish colleges as a means of promoting and implementing racial uplift and self-determination.

Finally, the African American experience in the United States is a rich, complex, and lengthy one. The original A.M.E. Church history book is a two-volume work and if it continued to be written in that format would probably equal over 100 volumes by now.⁴² I often feel that I cannot do justice to all of the events, individuals, and organizations that were active and emerging during the time period in which I focus my dissertation. I simply note that information on certain subjects or people can and should be found elsewhere in greater detail. Any omission of information has been made solely by me and to the best of my ability I have documented what is relevant to this study. After all, time and space and relevance are of concern when writing a dissertation. Like many eager and ambitious doctoral students, I hope to keep digging in the archives and find even more information and include even greater details and put it all together in a more comprehensive form. Until that moment comes, this is a dissertation about the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its pursuit of racial uplift and self-determination through the establishment of institutions of higher education.

the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1884-1910” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1975).

⁴² For this dissertation I primarily utilize volume 1, which covers from the Church’s beginning in 1784 (before the Church was officially formed) to about 1880, when the Church begins to expand to places such as Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Africa.

Contextual Timeline

To provide some context for my discussion of racial uplift, the A.M.E. Church, and higher education, I provide this rough timeline of events:

- 1619 1st slaves arrive in Colonial America
- 1712 New York City Slave Revolt – 70 were arrested and jailed, 26 convicted and sentenced o death and one was executed on a breaking wheel
- 1760 Richard Allen born
- 1773 First Black Baptist (enslaved) congregation formed in Silver Bluff, South Carolina
- 1777 Richard Allen buys his and his brother’s freedom. Allen’s biracial mother, African father and children were household slaves of prominent Quaker lawyer and jurist Benjamin Chew.
- 1787 Richard Allen and Absalom Jones led the Black members out of Philadelphia’s St. George’s Methodist Church and (with some Quaker assistance) formed the Free African Society that assisted fugitive slaves and new migrants. Allen later purchased land and established Mother Big Bethel African Methodist Church (the first A.M.E. Church in the United States)
- 1800 Gabriel Prosser, enslaved, literate blacksmith, led a slave revolt near Richmond, Virginia. Gabriel and 26 others were hanged
- 1802 The Ohio Constitution outlaws slavery. It also prohibits free blacks from voting. The Ohio Legislature passes the first “Black Laws” which place other restrictions on free African Americans living in the state
- 1806 The African Meeting House (First African Baptist Church – formed in 1805) built in Boston – constructed almost entirely of Black labor. Oldest Black church still standing in the U.S. – was also a place for celebration and anti-slavery meetings. In 1832, Garrison founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society here
- 1810 Census of 1810
U.S. Population: 7,239,881
Black Population: 1,377,808 (19%) including 186,446 free African Americans
- 1811 Daniel Payne born
- 1814 Six hundred African American troops are among the U.S. Army of 3,000 led by General Andrew Jackson which defeats British forces at the Battle of New Orleans.

- 1816 A.M.E. Church founded in South Carolina
- 1820 Census of 1820
U.S. Population: 9,638,452
Black Population: 1,771,656 (18.4%) including 233,504 free African Americans
- 1822 Denmark Veysey is arrested for planning a slave rebellion in South Carolina
- 1826 On August 23, Edward Jones receives a degree from Amherst College in Massachusetts, becoming the first African American college graduate
- 1827 Freedom's Journal begins publication on March 16 in New York City as the first African American owned newspaper in the United States. The editors are John Russwurm and Samuel Cornish.
- 1830 Census of 1830
U.S. Population: 12,866,020
Black Population: 2,328,842 (18.1%) including 319,599 free African Americans
- 1832 Oberlin College is founded in Ohio. It admits African American men, black women and white women. By 1860 one third of its students are black
- 1837 The Institute for Colored Youth is founded in Southeastern Pennsylvania. It later becomes Cheyney University
- 1840 Census of 1840
U.S. Population: 17,069,453
Black Population: 2,873,648 (16.1%) including 386,293 free African Americans
- 1842 Daniel Payne joins A.M.E. Church
- 1843 Rev. Henry Highland Garnet delivers his controversial "Address to the Slaves" at the National Negro Convention meeting in Buffalo, New York, which calls for a servile insurrection
- 1844 1st mention of education at A.M.E. Church meeting
- 1847 Frederick Douglass begins publication of The North Star in Rochester, New York
- 1850 Census of 1850
U.S. population: 23,191,876
Black population: 3,638,808 (15.7%) including 433,807 free African Americans
- 1852 Payne elected as bishop of the A.M.E. Church
- 1854 On October 13, Ashmun Institute, the first institution of higher learning for young black men, is founded by John Miller Dickey and his wife, Sarah Emlen Cresson. In 1866 it is renamed Lincoln University (Pa.) after President Abraham Lincoln

- 1856 Wilberforce University becomes the first school of higher learning owned and operated by African Americans. It is founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Daniel A. Payne becomes the institution's first president
- 1857 On March 6, The Dred Scott Decision is handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court
- 1860 Census of 1860
U.S. population: 31,443,321
Black population: 4,441,830 (14.1%) including 488,070 free African Americans
November 6 Abraham Lincoln is elected U.S. President
- 1861 U.S. Civil War begins. Approximately 200,000 blacks (most are newly escaped/freed slaves) serve in Union armed forces and over 20,000 are killed in combat
- 1863 Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation takes effect on January 1, legally freeing slaves in areas of the South still in rebellion against the United States
- 1865 On February 1, 1865, Abraham Lincoln signs the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing slavery throughout the United States
On March 3, Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau to provide health care, education, and technical assistance to emancipated slaves. Congress also charters the Freedman's Bank to promote savings and thrift among the ex-slaves
- 1866 Fisk University is founded in Nashville, Tennessee on January 9
- 1867 Morehouse College is founded in Atlanta on February 14
On March 2, Howard University is chartered by Congress in Washington, D.C. The institution is named after General Oliver O. Howard who heads the Freedman's Bureau
- 1870 Census of 1870
U.S. population: 39,818,449
Black population: 4,880,009 (12.7%)
Hiram R. Revels (Republican) of Mississippi takes his seat in the U.S. Senate on February 25. He is the first black United States senator, though he serves only one year, completing the unexpired term of Jefferson Davis
- 1872 P.B.S. Pinchback first U.S. governor of African American descent
- 1876 In May, Edward Alexander Bouchet receives a Ph.D. from Yale University. He is the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from an American university and only the sixth American to earn a Ph.D. in physics. Bouchet is also believed to be the first African American elected to Phi Beta Kappa.
- 1880 Census of 1880
U.S. population: 50, 155, 783
Black population: 6, 580, 793 (13.1%)

- 1881 Spelman College, the first college for black women in the U.S., is founded on April 11 by Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles
On the Fourth of July Booker T. Washington opens Tuskegee Institute in central Alabama
- 1890 U.S. Census
U.S. population: 62,947,714
Black population: 7,488,676 (11.9%)
- 1895 In June, W.E.B. Du Bois becomes the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University
Booker T. Washington delivers his famous "Atlanta Compromise" address on September 18 at the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition. He says the "Negro problem" would be solved by a policy of gradualism and accommodation
- 1896 Plessey v. Ferguson is decided on May 18 when the U.S. Supreme Court rules that Southern segregation laws and practices (Jim Crow) do not conflict with the 13th and 14th Amendments. The Court defends its ruling by articulating the "separate but equal" doctrine
- 1900 Census of 1900.
U.S. population: 75,994,575
Black population: 8,833,994 (11.6%)

CHAPTER TWO

RACIAL UPLIFT AND SELF-DETERMINATION: 1787-1856

We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
Soldiers of the cross

On this ladder we are climbing,
Some are striving some are sighing
On this ladder some are trusting
Some are trying some are tiring
On this ladder we can seek Him,
We can know, Him we can serve Him,
Soldiers of the cross⁴³

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give a general overview of the rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination which dominated the political, social, and economic

⁴³ Negro spiritual, author and date unknown. This spiritual is probably based on the Biblical scripture found in Genesis 28:11-12, which is the story of when Jacob escaped from Esau, and Jacob had a vision of angels going up and down a ladder between heaven and earth. Spiritual songs became an important part of slave life. Even though prohibited by laws, slaves gathered together and sang songs for hours and danced after attending a service with their owners. The slaves also had meetings at secret places ("camp meetings," "bush meetings"), because they needed to meet one another and share their joys, pains and hopes. In rural meetings, thousands of slaves were gathered and listened to itinerant preachers, and sang spirituals, for hours. In the late 1700s, they sang the precursors of spirituals, which were called "corn ditties." The lyrics of Negro spirituals were tightly linked with the lives of their authors: slaves. While work songs dealt only with their daily life, spirituals were inspired by the message of Jesus Christ and his Good News (Gospel) of the Bible, "You can be saved." They are different from hymns and psalms because they were a way of sharing the hard condition of being a slave. James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson, *The Books of American Negro Spirituals* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1969), 11-50, 59.

discourse of Negroes⁴⁴ during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The time frame selected reflects the year in which the Free African Society was organized through Wilberforce University's twenty-fifth year under A.M.E. control. These dates reflect a time in American history during which slavery was still in existence and Negroes were not considered to be citizens, rather they were counted as property. This time period further reflects the beginning of the Civil War and the battle for emancipation for Negroes. The years 1787-1856 reflect a critical period in United States history, full of individual and community struggles, turning points and significant national decisions that would change the fate of the country for the future. Because of my ancestry and the emotion I feel when reading about slavery and the fight for freedom, it is a time period that is difficult to read and write about, but a period of time which lays the foundation for the A.M.E. Church's self-determining efforts towards racial uplift.

The importance of the rhetoric and philosophy of racial uplift and self-determination will be shown through the contributions of newspaper editors and columnists, the Negro associations and conventions, and through the creation of institutions such as churches and schools. The next chapter is devoted to the beginnings of Negro churches and schools, but nonetheless they are important to mention here. Because the time period studied included the height of slave-ownership in the South and restrictive laws for free Negroes in the South, this chapter will focus on primarily on racial uplift and self-determination activities by Negroes that took place primarily in the

⁴⁴ For accuracy with the historical context of the time period being researched for this project, the term Negroes will be used throughout the dissertation to refer to people of African descent (descendants of slaves) living in the United States. The term African is also used because it refers to those individuals who are first-generation Africans, mostly former slaves living in the United States.

Northern United States. As will be noted in the chapter, Negroes in the North also faced restrictions, opposition, and harassment, but because there was no overt slave ownership after the early 1800s in the North and because the majority of the abolitionists hailed from the Northern U.S., Negroes had an easier time implementing racial uplift and self-determination through the establishment of churches, self-help organizations, and schools.

In the first part of this chapter I provide an overview of the three major forms of racial uplift in order to create a contextual foundation for understanding the struggles that the A.M.E. Church faced in creating an educational philosophy⁴⁵ and institutions of higher education that were reflective of racial uplift and self-determination. In the second half of this chapter I show how racial uplift was advocated in the Negro newspapers, through the Negro conventions and associations, and through the Negro church.

Overview of Racial Uplift

We are to an extent the architects of our own fortune, and must rely mainly upon our own exertions for success. We, therefore, recommend to the youth of our race the observation of strict morality, temperate habits, and the practice of the acquisition of land, the acquiring of agriculture, of advancing to mercantile positions, and forcing their way into the various productive channels of literature, art, science and mechanics.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The A.M.E. Church's specific educational philosophy is discussed in chapter four.

⁴⁶ Excerpt from the minutes of the 1879 National Negro Conference at Nashville, Tennessee. August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1963), 44. In this quote are the three major forms of racial uplift: moral, economic, and intellectual. Throughout this chapter examples of each of these forms of racial uplift will be discussed. The research for this dissertation is based primarily on the intellectual form of racial uplift; and intellectual for these purposes has been defined by me as the pursuit of education (educating Negroes and building schools and colleges).

The complexities of building an ideology of racial uplift and self-determination are aptly captured in this quote taken from the proceedings of the 1879 Negro Convention held in Nashville, Tennessee. The rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination dominated the political, social, and economic discourse of Negroes during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁴⁷ Many Negro leaders often espoused their views of racial uplift and determination and attempted to encourage and motivate the Negro people to improve their moral, social, economic, and intellectual situation.⁴⁸ The words used by the Negro leaders and community took on different meanings and different modes of implementation depending on who was speaking or writing and in what forum. At times Negroes aligned themselves with the abolitionist and uplift rhetoric of white men and sometimes Negroes attempted to create and espouse their own rhetoric.

The racial uplift rhetoric espoused by whites came primarily from the abolitionists, the anti-slavery organizations, and some churches. Most of this rhetoric was concentrated towards freeing the slaves in the Southern states, but there was some opinions espoused about equal treatment and opportunity for Negroes living in the

⁴⁷ As will be demonstrated throughout the dissertation, various leaders used the terms and phrases elevation of the race, racial elevation, and racial uplift interchangeably. I use the phrase racial uplift to represent all of the terms utilized from 1787-1888. Also I use the term self-determination to represent the term of self-help as utilized during that same time period. Further, while it was rare, I will also show that some Negro leaders used the phrase “civil rights” even before the Civil War to generally refer to gaining access to education and having their own yet equal institutions to those of whites.

⁴⁸ For purposes of this dissertation Negro leaders are defined as ministers of predominantly black congregations, editors of black newspapers, and Negroes who were active in the various Negro conventions and who were able to share their ideas with large audiences. This definition is not limited to men, but given the circumstances of the time, mostly men were selected and arose to be recognized as leaders. The definition is also not limited to men with formal schooling, but because the promoters of racial uplift were often men who gave speeches or wrote editorials, the group of Negro leaders I focus on is biased towards those who did have some form of formal schooling.

Northern states as well. Just as the Negroes used the newspapers to share their opinions and promote freedom for slaves and elevation of free Negroes, the whites also used the newspapers to promote their views on Negro uplift and freedom. One such opinion was written by Edward Rushton. Rushton was one example of the many European men, living abroad, who often espoused their opinions against American slavery. He was a poet, co-founder of the School for the Blind in Liverpool, and editor of the *Liverpool Herald*. In 1773, Rushton was second mate on a slave ship sailing to Guinea. On the slave ship Rushton became friends with a young boy named Quamina, whom he taught to read. Rushton and Quamina were sent to shore in a small boat and when the small boat capsized, Quamina saved Rushton's life. This friendship he formed with Quamina and the maltreatment and callousness he witnessed towards slaves on a boat bound for Dominica (where he became blind due to contagious ophthalmia), most likely formed Rushton's strong anti-slavery sentiments. His first book of poems, *The West Indian Eclogues*, published in 1787, spoke of his abhorrence of slavery. In 1797, admonishing President George Washington for owning slaves Rushton wrote:

Your friend Jefferson has endeavored to show that the negroes are an inferior order of being; but surely you will not have the recourse to such a subterfuge. Your slaves, it may be urged, are well treated – That I deny – Man can never be well treated who is deprived of his rights. Your negroes are men. Where then are the rights of your negroes? Shame! Shame! That man should be deemed the property of man, or that the name of Washington should be found among the list of such proprietors.⁴⁹

On American soil, many white ministers also contributed to the rhetoric against slavery and for the uplift of the Negro people. At a time when many slave owners and

⁴⁹ Edward Rushton, *Expostulatory Letter to George Washington, of Mount Vernon, on His Continuing to be a Proprietor of Slaves* (Liverpool, 1797). This letter was turned into a pamphlet that was reprinted in many periodicals of that time. This citation comes from *The Time Piece and Literary Companion* 1 (May 26, 1797): 129.

proponents of slavery used the Bible and Christianity to justify the sale, ownership, and beating of slaves, Alexander McLeod, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation in New York, argued that slavery went against Christian principles and Christian morality. He wrote to the elders of his church:

The Reformed Presbytery has judicially condemned the practice [slavery] and warned its connections against it. His [man's] life and faculties are a gift from God. Considering man as a free agent, by the constitution of nature he has a right to the exercise of freedom. A delegated power he has from God, and no creature has a right to restrict him in its rightful exercise. How does this system, Christian, correspond to the slave trade? You behold your African brethren in the same miserable state in which you are yourself by nature. Do you not sympathize with them? Your Master has not excluded them from a share in his love, nor has the blessed redeemer interdicted them from claiming a share in his salvation. How can you degrade them, therefore, from that rank which their Maker has assigned to them.⁵⁰

Just as it was risky for enslaved Negroes or free Negroes to speak out in public against slavery or unjust treatment, whites also took a risk of being shunned by their communities or even killed if they were known to be fighting against slavery or supporting Negroes in any manner. One such man, who espoused his anti-slavery and uplift views in his newspaper and in speeches, was William Lloyd Garrison.

William Lloyd Garrison was an abolitionist, social reformer, and journalist. He founded and edited *The Liberator* (1831-1865), which was a weekly anti-slavery newspaper. Garrison also founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832 and the

⁵⁰ Alexander McLeod, "Negro Slavery Unjustifiable: A Discourse," *The American Review and Literary Journal* 2 (April 1, 1802): 450. McLeod wrote this discourse after being asked to take charge of a church in Orange, New York. He refused the call because he recognized the names of slave holders among the list of members of that particular church. *The American Review and Literary Journal* was edited by Charles Brockden Brown. This publication was a combination of the former *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, which was devoted primarily to reviewing new books and American literary works. The magazine ran for one year.

American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. Garrison was considered to be an outspoken man, and even though he stressed nonviolence and passive resistance there were several occasions on which he received death threats and was chased by a mob after calling for the immediate release of the slaves.⁵¹ Through his writings in his paper and his partnering with other abolitionists and free Negroes (Frederick Douglass, Charlotte Forten), Garrison was an active participant in the racial elevation efforts of the Negroes and a supporter of Negro education. The Freedmen's Aid Society that Garrison founded helped to raise money for schools and trained volunteer teachers to go down South.

On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hand of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; -- but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- AND I WILL BE HEARD.⁵²

Garrison was one of many whites who contributed to the efforts of advocating for the freedom of slaves and who assisted free Negroes in obtaining education and employment. Even though the rhetoric of uplift changed, the sentiment was still the same – assist Negroes to improve their condition in society.

August Meier captured the shifting rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination:

Broadly speaking – and at the risk of oversimplification – one may say that their proposals had tended to emphasize moral suasion in the Garrisonian 1830's, had largely shifted to political action in the Liberty Party and Free Soil 1840's, and had shifted again to a predominating

⁵¹ David Williams, *A People's History of the Civil War: Struggles for the Meaning of Freedom* (New York: The New Press, 2005), 38. This particular book is part of a series edited by Howard Zinn. I chose to use this book on the Civil War because Zinn's series attempts to look at history from a perspective that is not usually taken, through the "accounts of the struggles of common people to make their own history," 38.

⁵² William Lloyd Garrison, "To the Public," *The Liberator* 1 (January 1, 1831): 1.

emphasis on self-help, racial solidarity, and economic advancement and emigration in the disheartening 1850's.⁵³

With the passing of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, during the late 1860s and early 1870s conventions, and with the creation of institutions of higher education the foci of racial uplift and self-determination shifted. The shifts were directed by Negro leaders in the community and white and Negro advocates working with Negroes to improve their condition in society. The shifts ranged from fighting for an end to slavery to advocating for adequate education and employment for freed Negroes to fighting for education, employment, and housing for Negroes that was equal to that of whites. The shifts in rhetoric will be shown throughout this chapter as I look at the different forums in which Negro leaders of the time discussed the importance of racial uplift and its implementation through self-determination.

It is important to note that to a certain degree the ability to be self-determining and participate in racial uplift differed for Negroes in the Northern part of the United States. While admitting that social and political activity level of Negroes in the North differed greatly from that of Negroes in the South, Litwack cautions the historian to not oversimplify or essentialize the difference in treatment between Northern Negroes and Southern Negroes. In *North of Slavery: The Negro in Free States, 1790-1860*, Litwack wrote that although

Slavery eventually confined itself to the region below the Mason-Dixon Line, discrimination against the Negro and a firmly held belief in the

⁵³ Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 4. Garrisonian generally refers to Garrison's opposition to using overt political action as a means to ending slavery. In contrast, the Liberty Party (1840-1848) and the Free Soil Party (1848-1854) advocated for the use of political action towards the ending of slavery. The slogan for the Free Soil Party was "free soil, free speech, free labor, and free men" (Williams, *A People's History of the Civil War*, 30 and 46-48).

superiority of the white race were not restricted to one section but were shared by an overwhelming majority of white Americans in both the North and the South.⁵⁴

One example of this white racial superiority and opposition to Negro self-determination can be seen in this article titled “An Inundation of Negroes,” from the *New York Herald* in which the contributor bemoans the increasing number of Negroes in the North and complains that this leads to less slaves in the South to labor in the cotton, sugar, rice, and tobacco fields.

This influx of negroes and this saucy independence are the very natural results of the teachings of the abolitionists, who hold that a man is as good as a negro only when he behaves himself and goes strongly for emancipation. In the North these escaped negroes will fill our poorhouses and increase our taxes. Many of them will learn trades, as they are already doing in Philadelphia, and white men and women will be crowded out of employment. Already we have more negroes here than we know what to do with. But, while this black labor is a surplus here, it is greatly needed at the South. Everywhere emancipation of slaves results in a scarcity of labor. The problem of the inevitable negro is taking this shape, therefore: slaves are becoming scarce at the South, where they will be sorely needed, and plentiful at the North, where they are not needed, but are a burden and expense. Something must be done to remedy this evil, and that immediately. Freedom for black has been a popular cry in some quarters for years. It is about time now to raise the cry of freedom for the whites.⁵⁵

While Negroes were not enslaved in the North, it is clear that their presence was not welcomed and that there were white people who were not going to support the uplift or progress of Negroes. A member of the Whig Party in New York submitted a ten-point opinion piece reinforcing the idea that some Northerners agreed with the continuation of slavery. Among the ten points he wrote:

⁵⁴ Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), vii.

⁵⁵ “An Inundation of Negroes,” *The New York Herald* (March 31, 1862): n.p.

[point 6] - That slavery, if it is an evil, is one that cannot be remedied. We must look at it as one of those circumstances permitted by an overruling Providence, which we can no more control than famine, or pestilence, or war; and that all those are far greater evils than slavery. . . . [point 7] - That the condition of the Southern slaves is far better in all respects than that of the free Negroes of the North, and of a large population of white laborers. . . . [point 10] – That the slaves in this country are not yet prepared for freedom, and could not be put upon an equality with the whites by any act that the wisdom of man can contrive. The free negroes of the North have not been able to achieve this equality. They do not seek it, and even the abolitionists have not permitted it.⁵⁶

Despite this common belief system of white racial superiority, there were regional differences in how whites interacted with and treated Negroes. Overall, Negroes in the North were able to make more strides towards racial uplift and self-determination than Negroes in the South. In his book Litwack goes on to describe the progress that Northern Negroes were able to make in the social, political, economic, and intellectual arenas. In his preface however, he alludes to the regional differences in racial uplift and self-determination for Negroes.

But the free society of the North and the slave society of the South dictated different forms of Negro protest. Above all, the Northern Negro was a free man; he was not subject to the master or overseer; he could not be bought and sold; he could not be arbitrarily separated from his family. Although a victim of racial proscription, he could – and on several occasions did – advance his political and economic position in the antebellum period.”⁵⁷

Negro slaves in the South had to meet in secrecy and risked being whipped or lynched if their meetings were discovered, especially since slave owners were scared of slaves

⁵⁶ The author is listed as A New York Whig, “Northern Views of Slavery,” *Liberator* 20 (January 18, 1850): 1. The *Liberator* was considered to be one of the greatest anti-slavery newspapers of its time. It discontinued publication after the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. This article comes from a section the paper adopted called “The Refuge of Oppression,” in which articles from the Southern pro-slavery and anti-abolition movements were reprinted.

⁵⁷ Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, ix.

running away or rebellious slaves who might organize an insurrection. Slave owners and proponents of slavery often discussed and wrote about what to do with the slaves who ran away or those who assisted or employed runaway slaves.

What is to become of the poor, ignorant and helpless negroes, who either run away or are stolen from their comfortable homes in the South, and sent up North by the Yankee invading army, is, says the Savannah Republican, a problem hard of solution. When they get there, they find themselves among strangers and enemies, rather than friends, and will be denied the privilege even of working for support. Only the other day the Associates of Slaughter and Packing House Men in Chicago, passed the following preamble and resolutions at one of their meetings: "Whereas, it has come to the knowledge of the meeting that it is the intention of one or more of the leading packers of this town to bring negro labor into competition with that of white men, for the purpose of reducing the wages of the latter to the lowest possible standard: Resolved, That we, the packing house men of the town of South Chicago, pledge ourselves not to work for any packer, under any consideration, who will, in any manner, bring negro labor into competition with our labor; and further, Resolved, That if any member of this society should so far demean himself as to work in a packing house where negro labor is employed, his name shall be stricken from the roll of members of this society, and such person shall henceforth cease to enjoy the confidence of nor derive any benefit from this society."⁵⁸

These types of public pronouncements were one way to discourage anyone from assisting Negroes and to discourage Negroes themselves from running away, migrating up North, or pursuing means to improve their condition in life.

Negro slaves had no control over their location, their time or their movements as they were subjected to the desires of the slave owners. With a few exceptions Negro protest as a means towards self-determination and racial uplift in the South did not truly

⁵⁸ Author Unknown, "The Fate of Stolen and Runaway Negroes," *The Charleston Mercury* 81 (October 29, 1862): 1. Just as the Negroes expressed their ideas about racial uplift and self-determination through newspaper opinion pieces, so did the white men express their feelings against Negro independence and for continued enslavement through newspapers. Many newspapers (*The Charleston Mercury*, *The Richmond Enquirer*, and *The New York Herald*) during this time period often reported on runaway slaves, their capture, and their fate.

exist.⁵⁹ Negroes who were enslaved in the South had no rational means to pursue or engage in moral, economic, or intellectual development. The majority of proactive work towards being self-determining and racial uplift took place in the North, and thus the research for this dissertation focuses on the efforts that took place in the North (see footnote 1 in this chapter).

As will be shown throughout this chapter and the dissertation, the three major forms of uplift included moral development, economic development, and intellectual development. The nature of the term racial uplift and the philosophy that underlies it is complex and even attempting to describe that complexity has been difficult. There is no single comprehensive definition for racial uplift. The terminology appears so simple yet the context in which the rhetoric was espoused could change the meaning. Some of the primary differences stemmed from what mode of racial uplift an individual or organization thought was best – equal political rights, equal social access, or moral, intellectual, and/or economic development – an underlying philosophy could include one, all of, or just a few of these components. The philosophy of racial uplift could and often did change by region, by decade, and by prominent voice (who was leading the Negro Conventions, editing the newspapers, in political office, or pastoring the Negro churches).

⁵⁹ Williams reports that slaves from time to time managed to “engineer work slowdowns. They feigned illness and ignorance. They sabotaged or destroyed equipment, or used the threat of it as a bargaining chip for better treatment.” The most violent forms of slave protest are instances in which slaves killed their owners. One well known example is of Nat Turner’s rebellion in 1831. There were other such uprisings in New Orleans and Alabama. Not all of the rebellions were successful. Denmark Vesey’s attempt in South Carolina resulted in his hanging along with other conspirators. John Brown’s attempt to arm the slaves at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia resulted in him being hung for treason. Williams, *A People’s History of the Civil War*, 8-9, 18, and 48-49.

Meier explained how creating one unified ideology of racial uplift was difficult. There was even debate over the idea of self-determination - the fact that creating separate predominantly-Negro institutions and organizations promoted the very segregation that Negroes were battling.

There was a real basis for ideological conflict over this matter, and a very real paradox facing the Negro leaders. They were fundamentally struggling for integration into American society, for the elimination of segregation of any sort. Yet in creating a racial equal rights organization they appeared to be creating a segregated movement in itself. Independence and self-help were commonplace virtues in American culture, and no one could deny that in union there was strength.⁶⁰

Even individuals within the same organization had differing perspectives on racial uplift and self-determination.

Once slavery was over (as indicated by the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863), and Negroes could supposedly experience more freedom, America needed a plan as to how to deal with this population of people – how to coexist with and integrate the Negro into society.⁶¹ Part of the racial uplift action plan involved Negroes proving that they had the ability to create and sustain their own institutions and, therefore, were neither a burden to society nor a social problem. During the pre-Civil War era the pursuit of racial uplift was different for Negroes living in the North than it

⁶⁰ Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 7-8.

⁶¹ While the best known comprehensive work on the topic of the Negro as a social problem was undertaken by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal in 1944 – *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* – there is evidence of earlier thoughts and discussion about the Negro as the social problem. An example of earlier discussions on this topic can be found in the *Christian Recorder* 5, no. 238 (July 22, 1865): 1, in which the contributor (unknown) titled the article “What shall be done with the Negro?” In the article the author discusses the debates that had been waging about “what shall be done for the negroes?” as opposed to “what shall be done with the negro?” These two questions were one way in which notions of racial uplift could be discussed.

was for the Negroes in the South, the great majority of who were enslaved. Even for free Negroes⁶² there were strict laws that limited speech and behavior, and thus limited action towards racial uplift more so than in the North. One such law was referred to as the Black Codes. Under these codes former slaves could not serve on juries, hold public office, or quit jobs voluntarily. There were also vagrancy laws. According to these laws blacks found “wandering or strolling about in idleness, who are able to work and who have not property to support them” would be arrested.⁶³

It is difficult to say what racial uplift looked like in the antebellum period. By the numbers, the U.S. Census of 1860 reports that there were thirty-one million people counted and of those thirty-one million, twenty-seven million were white people. Of

⁶² On January 1, 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, technically freeing the slaves. Federal government policies and contracts sanctioned former slaves to work on the land where they had been enslaved as contract laborers or sharecroppers. However, they were not given the tools to work the land, and former slaves had to obtain them on credit from the suppliers, who often marked up the prices and when harvest time came, the profit share rarely covered the debt incurred by the Negro sharecroppers. Not satisfied with Lincoln’s progress to completely abolish slavery and create equal opportunities for all men and women, a new political party called the Radical Democratic Party was formed in 1864. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony led the effort to draft and collect signatures for a petition pressuring Congress to pass a national emancipation act, not just one that would be ratified by ten percent of the states as Lincoln had proposed. This petition was delivered to Senator Charles Sumner on February 9, 1864. On April 8, the Senate passed what would become the Thirteenth Amendment and sent it on to the House of Representatives. The House could not get the two-thirds voted necessary to pass the amendment and therefore sent it to the states for ratification. Lincoln never seemed to fully support the amendment, claiming that it was just a “war measure whose application could end with the war,” as he promised Secretary of State, William Seward that the Southern states could maintain their right to hold slaves as part of the deal to end the war. Lincoln’s successor Andrew Johnson was no more committed to enforcing the Thirteenth Amendment than had been Lincoln. He left the southern states to do what they would; resulting in many slaves not even realizing they were free when the war was over. Williams, *A People’s History of the Civil War*, 379-387 and 471-472.

⁶³ Williams, *A People’s History of the Civil War*, 472.

those twenty-seven million, eight million lived in Southern slave-owning states. Of those eight million, 385,000 reported being slave owners – that means that approximately 4.8% of all whites in the South owned slaves. Additionally there were 4.5 million people identified as Negro living in the United States, four million living in the South. Of those four million living in the South 261, 988 are identified as free Negroes (a total of 476,748 are identified in the U.S.).⁶⁴

I argue that secret meetings among slaves for purposes of fellowship and sharing information as well as planned (executed or not) slave rebellion were examples of racial uplift because these meetings were a form of self-determining resistance. Not self-determination in the sense that the Negro slaves were politically free, because that was definitely not the situation, but self-determining in the sense that the slaves did not always passively accept their plight, they were aware of their inequality and inequity, and they were willing (even if not always able) to act out against their oppression.

Racial uplift in the post-Civil War and Reconstruction eras, whether written or spoken, referred to overcoming the ill-effects of slavery (primarily lack of communal organization, illiteracy, and poverty) and working toward gaining the same type of rights and privileges as well as creating the same types of institutions and organizations that whites enjoyed. In addition to being excluded from white institutions, organizations, and businesses, the post-Civil War and Reconstruction eras were times in which people of African descent were considered to be a social problem.

⁶⁴ Joseph C. G. Kennedy, Superintendent of Census, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eight Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 1864; Census of Population and Housing, 1860 Census <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1860.htm> and American Civil War Census Data <http://www.civil-war.net/census.asp?census=Total>, (accessed June 19, 2009).

Overview of Self-Determination

For the Negro, implementing and successfully accomplishing forms of racial uplift would take self-help and self-determination. Self-determination was generally used in reference to the fact that Negro leaders knew racial uplift would and should begin with Negroes creating their own schools, newspapers, churches, and conventions – all of which would allow Negroes to express themselves freely.⁶⁵ This aspect of self-determination is important because it distinguishes what Negroes wanted to do for themselves as opposed to the racial uplift that whites engaged in on behalf of and for Negroes.

It would be unfair and incorrect to create a category called “white racial uplift for Negroes” because each individual or institution that engaged in abolitionist or elevation efforts went about it differently. Earlier I provided some examples of individuals who wrote articles specifically rejecting slavery. Pre-emancipation, this could be considered one form of racial uplift – the promotion of freedom and equality for Negroes, especially in the South. Post-emancipation and Civil War, racial uplift efforts engaged in by Europeans and American whites spanned the gamut from debate that ended without action to passive support in the form of newspaper articles and public speeches to assertive political actions to the creation of institutions for Negroes by whites. A few examples of these efforts include, but are not limited to: the efforts by Elizabeth Candy

⁶⁵ “The realization that the bettering of social conditions depended largely on the efforts of black people themselves came early, and ‘self-improvement’ became the theme to which black leaders returned to most often....Speaking and writing in the characteristic rhetoric of early 19th century reformers, they stressed that the ‘elevation’ of the race depended on the ‘self-improvement’ of the individual,” Frederick Cooper, “Elevating the Race: The Social Thought of Black Leaders, 1827-50,” *American Quarterly* 24, no. 5 (December 1972): 604.

Stanton and Susan B. Anthony along with Frederick Douglass to get the Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution passed; the 1834 admissions policy of Oberlin College in Ohio, which provided “free admission to colored students on equal terms with whites;” and the founding of Ashum Institute by the Presbyterians in 1853.

Some of the greatest racial uplift efforts enacted by whites came in the form of the creation of educational institutions. “The Northern mission societies, which were most prominent in the early crusade to establish institutions of higher education for the ex-slaves, were also largely responsible for sustaining the leading black colleges.”⁶⁶ The American Missionary Association (AMA), which was the missionary division of the Congregational Church, founded four colleges for Negroes (Fisk University, Dillard University, Talladega College, and Tougaloo College). Other church denominations’ missionary associations followed suit establishing such colleges as Bennett College, Clark University, Claflin College, Morehouse College, Shaw University, and Spelman College, to name a few. The missionary philanthropists (as Anderson describes them) worked hard to assist Negroes overcome the intellectual deficits left behind from slavery.⁶⁷

There were and are many perspectives that favor or oppose white benevolence on behalf of Negroes. Whatever the varied opinions of the time and in retrospect, I contend that what differentiates white benevolence from Negro uplift is the notion of self-determination. The ability of Negroes to create their own institutions and associations

⁶⁶ James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South: 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press 1988), 239.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 239-242; and Henry N. Drewry and Humphrey Doermann, *Stand and Prosper: Private Black Colleges and Their Students* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 34-37.

and form their own destinies is an important aspect of racial uplift that will be shown throughout this dissertation.

Initially (and without a true reason as to why) when writing this section on self-determination I resisted delving into the literature on the American Enlightenment era. But as any diligent doctoral student knows, you do as your advisor instructs you to do. From the very first book I opened on the American Enlightenment it was clear to me that there was a clear and important connection between this era, self-determination, and the Negro desire to better himself.

The period of the American Enlightenment spanned the half-century from 1765 to 1815 and was, in the words of John Adams, “an age of revolutions and constitutions.” It opened with the developing arguments for separation from Great Britain, culminating with the Declaration of Independence. Efforts were then made to establish securely the new political order for which the revolution was fought. These creative inventions included the Articles of Confederation, state constitutions, and the Federal Constitution. The third and final phase embraced the first critical steps toward transforming a ratified paper constitution into a functioning representative government on a national scale.⁶⁸

While the Negroes did not create their own constitution, they did fight for and receive freedom from an oppressor and they did establish their own institutions – churches, conventions, newspapers, and schools. Along the way there were some revolutions – slave uprisings, abolitionist protests, anti-slavery documents, and the separation from white institutions and control. Key to the era of Enlightenment and to any social movement or revolution is the concept of self-determination.

The men that Koch highlights in her book as examples and leaders of the American Enlightenment are Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton (all, ironically, slave-owners). While the terms

⁶⁸ Koch, *The American Enlightenment*, 19-20.

autonomy or self-determination are not explicitly written in their diaries, letters, or speeches, there was the sentiment that in order to build a great nation, Americans must do this on their own, without the influence or assistance of the Europeans. Reflecting on American's independence from Great Britain, Thomas Jefferson wrote to President James Monroe,

That made us a nation, this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark on it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe.⁶⁹

The notion that freedom and independence and the building of a nation comes from the efforts of those people within that nation, without outside help, seems to be a fundamental tenet of Enlightenment.

Self-determination is a difficult concept to define and explain. The ideal of self-determination probably has its roots in European colonialism. The broad ideal was to define and translate what should be considered universal ethical rights – freedom from oppressive tyrannical rule and freedoms of religion, politics, and speech. This concept promotes the idea of autonomy – that people are able to act on their own free will.⁷⁰ In

⁶⁹ Ibid., 367-368.

⁷⁰ Looking at the literature on moral and political philosophy it is clear that the concepts of autonomy (free will) and self-determination (self-reliance) are complex. It is further clear to me that the concepts can be defined, argued, and enacted differently if you are a French philosopher as opposed to a U.S. President in the 1700s as opposed to a recently freed Negro in America. I am aware of the philosophical arguments of liberalism, free will, and justice, etc. However, I do not believe that I can accurately apply those principles the way in which they were defined by the French philosophers of the 1700s and 1800s because the social and political context is different for the Negro slave and freed Negro in America during that same time period. The sentiment

the United States, the history of self-determination began with the European settlers pushing westward and essentially destroying the majority of existing Native American cultures. Although not the most ideal situation, Native Americans were allowed to live with a certain degree of autonomy, free from certain state and federal legal restrictions. This obviously, is a double-edged sword in that Native Americans live autonomously and are able to be self-determining about their rights and destinies – they have their own schools, health clinics, etc. Yet at the same time they were restricted to reservations created by the federal government.⁷¹

Another early example of the fight for or the development of autonomy and self-determination is the American Civil War (1861-1865). In many ways the institution of slavery and the Confederate South were oppressing people of African descent, thus prohibiting them from the ability to be autonomous and self-determining. There were many efforts after the American Civil War implemented by European-Americans to assist Negroes in becoming participatory citizens – socially, morally, intellectually, and

underlying the ideals is transferrable, but not the application of those ideals. The *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* does not have a definition for autonomous, instead the dictionary refers the reader to the concept “free will problem.” In social work, the term further implies that individuals have strengths, knowledge, and skills to resolve their own problems and to shape their own futures in a positive and productive manner. As it relates to the Negro post-slavery, the term autonomous has significance in that this human right to chose for oneself had been denied (by force and by law) and there was now an opportunity to show and use those inherent strengths, skills, and knowledge. Again, this was an important aspect of racial uplift because instead of allowing others to do for them, Negroes wanted to, Negroes could, and Negroes did do for themselves. Alan Charles Kors (Editor in Chief), *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, vol. 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 88-96 and 314-322; Robert Audi, ed., *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁷¹ United States Department of the Interior - Indian Affairs, Office of Self-Governance and Division of Self-Determination, <http://www.doi.gov/bia/index.html> (accessed June 2009). See also Tribal Self Governance Act of 1994 (formerly the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975).

economically. However, the desire to be autonomous - think for self, walk and talk when desired, worship freely, vote, buy and sell - and the need to overcome the ill effects of slavery were the impetus for Negroes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to embrace the concepts of self-determination and racial uplift.⁷² Hence, while self-determination rooted in Enlightenment arguments appears to be the philosophical basis for racial uplift, there remains the terrible irony that white advocates of self-determination often were oppressors.

The Different Forums for Racial Uplift

I shall, with your approbation, commence a series of papers or communications for the Colored American [the newspaper], by which to point out the means to be made use of in their elevation and improvement, as well as to make a few humble, but well-meaning suggestions, concerning the most effectual methods of employing those means. And as in doing so, I am alone impelled by motives to the purest nature, and having the interests and well being of my colored fellow citizens at heart, I trust you will be pleased to overlook the defect which may occur in my communication, they being solely attributable to my youth and inexperience. But as it is not my intention to enter into any long and elaborate detail, but simply to point out a *few* of the most efficient and prominent means within their grasp, I shall proceed to name them in order, and to my remarks upon them shall form the subject of this and succeeding chapters. The first, then, worthy of our particular attention is *religion*; then may follow, *morality, temperance, education, industry, THE PRESS* and *refinement of manners*.⁷³

⁷² Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 109-125.

⁷³ Cushing, "Means of Elevation – No. 1," *The Colored American* 3, no. 15 (June 8, 1839): 2-3. This excerpt is taken from the first article in a series written by Cushing (probably his last name). There were six articles to this series – each one numbered and titled for a different mode of elevations (No. 1 - Religion, No. 2 - Morality, No. 3 - Temperance, No. 4 - Education, No. 5 - Industry, and No. 6 - The Press). The articles ran from June 8, 1839 – November 16, 1839. The author is simply identified by his last name and location (New York). The series is important because it outlines specific areas in which Negroes are encouraged to make improvements in order to elevate the race. The foci of elevation written about in this series would continue to appear in other articles by

The complexity of defining racial uplift and the essence of the phrase's meaning is best presented and expressed (a) by the editors of and contributors to the Negro newspapers of the time and (b) through the organizations and conventions formed for the purposes of improvement (Moral Reform Society, Convention for the Improvement of the Free People of Color, National Convention of Colored Citizens, etc.) and their rhetoric. The rhetoric of racial uplift was also presented through the creation of institutions such as the black churches and black schools and colleges. The black church and the black college as vehicles of racial uplift will be presented in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

Racial Uplift and Self-Determination in the Negro Newspapers. Sources of news were limited for Negroes in the late-1700s into the early 1800s. There is a strong history of oral tradition – passing down news, family history, and other vital information verbally, but due to slavery and limited educational opportunities for Negroes, news came in only a few forms. “Throughout the war [Civil War], slaves met in secret to hold prayer meetings for freedom...Those few slaves who could read kept up with events through pilfered newspapers and spread the word to their neighbors.”⁷⁴ Besides the

other authors and in other newspapers. These foci would be spoken about at many conventions and debated by prominent men. As far as my research shows there was no written objection to this series of articles. In fact, there may have been a point when Cushing stopped writing temporarily, and a contributor wrote asking where he was and when he would continue. Elevation and improvements were important topics to Cushing. Prior to this series of articles on the means of elevation, Cushing wrote another article in which he deplored the “numerous grog shops and porter houses” because they impeded the work of colored men towards elevation. “Things Which Impede Our Progress,” *The Colored American* 2, no. 37 (November 3, 1838): 2.

⁷⁴ Williams, *A People's History of the Civil War*, 126. Also Kolchin says that through the stories of slave folktales slaves “entertained one another, expressed fears and longings, and presented their children with didactic lessons on how to get along in a dog-

preached sermon, the Negro newspaper was probably the most important means of communications for the Negro community in the 1800s. Negro newspapers provided information not only about current domestic and international events, but also highly opinionated editorials on anything that might be of interest to the Negro community. The papers provided a forum for communicating church information, political news, letters from Negro leaders, birth, death, and marriage announcements, and the opening of new associations and institutions. Even for the illiterate population, the Negro newspaper was the best way to keep in touch with the community, the country, and even the world. Those who could read would read out loud the news of the day or week to those who could not. Also, ministers often included the news of current events in their weekly Sunday announcements or weaved current events into their sermons.⁷⁵

Due to the fact that the first widely circulated Negro newspapers were created in the North, contributors freely espoused their views on almost any topic including slavery, religion, politics, the economy, and education.⁷⁶ One note of interest is the fact that some of the Negro newspapers had contributors as far away as England and France. This could have been due to the fact that some of the bishops and ministers of the Negro churches traveled to England to appeal for money to support some of their efforts:

(We clip the following from The, Watchman, Published at London, England) - AFRICAN METHODIST CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES. The recent emancipation of the African races has placed the

eat-dog world.” See Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery: 1619-1877* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 154.

⁷⁵ Angell and Pinn, eds., *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, xiii-xvi; Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 162.

⁷⁶ As will be discussed shortly, the first Negro newspaper (*Freedom's Journal*) was published in 1827 in New York by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm.

Methodist-African Ministry in a position second to none in the importance of their work, whether we contemplate the field which they are well fitted to occupy in their evangelical ministrations, or the bearing of their labors upon the future of the United States and of Africa itself. Our readers are, no doubt, well acquainted with the fact that there are separate Conferences of African Methodist Ministers, and distinct Church organizations in connection with them in America, and that their Conferences have formed a part of the great Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. The desirableness of an educated ministry has long been felt, and in 1863 the only Collegiate Institution formed and owned by the colored men in North America was established near Xenia, in the State of Ohio, and called after our great philanthropist and statesman, Wilberforce University. Its present faculty consists of a Professor of Theology and Mental Science, a Professor of Greek and Mathematics, a Professor of Natural Science, a Professor of English, Latin and French with a lady preceptress; of these five, three are colored persons. In April 1865, this institution was in a prosperous condition, when, by the act of an incendiary, it was reduced to ashes. The trustees are now struggling to rebuild it, and have deputed the Rev. Daniel A. Payne, D.D., Bishop of the Methodist African Church, himself a man of color, to visit Europe to solicit help from the friends of the African races. He brings with him all necessary credentials and recommendations from our well-known friends, Bishops Jones, Thompson, Simpson and others and carries in himself the most obvious of all recommendations, viz. His own frank Christian and gentlemanly bearing.⁷⁷

Men and women from England often contributed articles passionately denouncing slavery and encouraging the “people of colour” to pursue employment and education to improve their lot in society.

These papers also provided an outline for debate and exchange, a way of measuring social conditions and humanizing life that spoke to abolition and other pressing issues for the African American community. All of this was done through information shared from churches, lodges, letters and clipping services, as well as political discussions generated by the times.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Daniel Payne traveled to England to raise money for Wilberforce University. “A Voice from England,” *Christian Recorder* 7, no. 24 (June 15, 1867): 2.

⁷⁸ Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, xvii. It is unclear how many subscribers were overseas, but there is indication that people sent in letters, but did not hold subscriptions to every African American newspaper available. This from a *Christina Recorder* reader: “DEAR DR. TANNER:-I am fast recovering my usual health and (D.V.) hope to be “back in Dixie” by Christmas. I

Negro journalism became the primary way in which the Negro people could express their voices. Even though most of the black-owned and operated newspapers had a short-lived circulation (some papers had a circulation time of one to five years at most) and some of their volumes are incomplete, their significance has been the subject of several research projects, which has made it easier to access the newspapers either on microfilm or via the internet through the archives of historical societies and university libraries.⁷⁹

My initial assumption was that the contributors and subscribers to these newspapers were all of African descent. After some careful reading and evaluation it was apparent that not all of the authors were Negro men living in America. Several of the articles that illustrated thoughts and emotions about slavery, racial uplift, and African education were submitted anonymously, signed with only initials, a last name, or with a pseudonym. While trying to understand this phenomenon of anonymously submitted articles, I believed that the anonymous articles had most likely been submitted by the

would like very much to see the RECORDER sometimes. Miss its weekly visits very much; can you send me one? I hope you are well and the cause is prospering. May God bless you in your efforts to abolish caste. I am not silent here; as ever my voice is still heard pleading against casts prejudice, colorphobia and the devil. Yours in Christ," (*Christian Recorder*, 12 June 1884). Also, "OUR RECORDER is doing a good work in England . In a note recently received from a good lady friend she says: I find your CHRISTIAN RECORDER most useful in correcting current mistakes as to the attainment and character of your people. It is increasingly good and interesting," *Christian Recorder* (September 20, 1883): n.p.

⁷⁹ I believe that it is an interesting study in archival history to examine in which places the black newspapers could be found. The locations often had little or no connection to the origination of the newspaper or the founders of the paper. For example, through a follow-up grant that is related to a project initiated by James P. Danky (newspaper and periodical librarian at the Wisconsin Historical Society and author of a comprehensive guide titled *The African American Newspapers and Periodicals: A National Bibliography and Union List*), the Wisconsin Historical Society has scanned the microfilm volumes one and two of the *Freedom's Journal* onto adobe acrobat making it easier for those interested to read and access. www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/aanp/freedom/volume1.asp (accessed February 7, 2009).

editor(s) of the newspaper, but it was clear by some of the sentiments expressed or language used that this was not always the case. I attempted to decipher if maybe this was done out of fear of retaliation by angry whites or if it was common practice to not provide an author's name. As often happens in historical work, I cannot find a clear explanation and there is also no certainty about the race of the author of many articles. In general it may not matter much what the race of the author was, but in the case of this dissertation it mattered to me. My initial premise of racial uplift and self-determination relied on the notion that it was promoted and enacted solely by Negroes. To have whites contributing such sentiments to the black newspapers brings a slightly different perspective. This is an issue that I continue to work through as I research and write.

There is a rich resource to be found in the 19th century Negro newspapers. They chronicle cultural, economic, intellectual, social, and political history during the 1800s. These early newspapers also contain biographical information, statistics on communities, poetry, and advertisements. The newspapers discussed in this section capture the Negro experience of the 19th century.

The first Negro newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was founded in New York in 1827, and was edited by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm. In 1828, Russwurm emigrated to Liberia and Cornish changed the name of the paper to *Rights for All*, which was published until 1829.⁸⁰ Even though Cornish's paper was short-lived, it set a precedent for other papers to come. *The Colored American*, which was also created in New York, began as *The Weekly Advocate* published weekly from January 1837 to December 25, 1841 by Samuel Cornish and was "designed to be the organ of Colored

⁸⁰ Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought*, xvi-xvii.

Americans – to be looked on as their own, and devoted to their interests – through which they can make known their views to the public – can communicate with each other and their friends, and their friends with them; and to maintain their well-known subjects of Abolition and Colonization.”⁸¹ *The North Star* (Rochester, New York) was established in 1847 and was edited by Frederick Douglass, who in 1851 changed the name of his paper to the *Frederick Douglass Paper*. *The Christian Recorder*, created in Philadelphia, was published by the A.M.E. Church and began in 1854 under the editorship of Reverence Jabez Pitt Campbell and re-established itself again in 1861 under the editorship of Elisha Weaver.⁸²

In 1839, in an editorial titled “Elevation of our people,” Samuel Cornish⁸³ explained racial uplift and self-determination and the complexity that surrounded those terms.

To raise up a people to intellectual, social, and moral life, long having been kept down, oppressed, and proscribed, mentally, socially, and legally; whose education has been entirely neglected, and thought either not proper, or possible by others, and by themselves thought to be out of

⁸¹ Quoted from the abstract provided by Accessible Archives. Accessible Archives is one database that can be used to access articles from many of the Negro newspapers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The primary challenge with this database is that searches cannot be conducted strictly by year or volume.

⁸² More attention is given to the *Christian Recorder* in chapter four.

⁸³ In 1827 Cornish joined John Russworm in editing *Freedom's Journal*, which first appeared on March 16. Russworm assumed sole editorial control on September 24, 1827, but Cornish took over the paper in 1829 when Russworm was forced to resign because of his support of the colonization movement. After a two-month hiatus, Cornish continued the paper for less than a year under the name *The Rights of All*. Samuel Cornish helped to organize the first black Presbyterian Church in New York. For a few months in 1832 he served as pastor of the First African Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, founded by John Gloucester. Cornish's brother was an A.M.E. minister. Accessible Archives abstract, <http://exproxy.gsu.edu:2100/about/aboutAA.htm> (accessed on May 24, 2004).

their power; whose claims have been regarded as though they had none, and against whom has been every man's hand, and whose disposition and habits, social and moral, have been formed under those circumstances, is a work, than which there is none more honorable and God-like....As to the best means we may not all be agreed, perhaps we need some tangible point, around which all may rally, and from which to send out an influence which shall be felt and do its work. We believe it is mainly to be done, by ourselves, the resources are now within our reach, we have the elements in ourselves, to bring the necessary aid.⁸⁴

Cornish provided some other examples of which might constitute racial uplift:

Wealth and economy are means of elevation; but wealth like political power, is possessed to so limited an extent by our people, and poverty is so general, that it has perhaps no practical effect. Education, social as well as literary, is one of the most feasible and important means, to our elevation. We must also, brethren, cultivate a reading disposition; upon this depends, as well as absolutely the most of our knowledge; independence of thought, and also of character; without these, there is not liberty of mind; men must think for themselves, and to know what to think about, men must read.⁸⁵

Racial elevation was a two-part process. The first part was to elevate away from the oppression, poverty, ignorance, and inequality of the past brought on primarily by slavery. The second part was to elevate towards being intellectually, socially, economically, and morally on the same level as white people (or as close to it as Negroes could get). As argued in 1839:

We hope our people will never be led, by any circumstances whatsoever, to entertain the vain hope of becoming a respected and elevated people in any other way, than by availing themselves of the legitimate and appropriate means. We must become equally virtuous – equal in education and wealth with our white brethren, before we can be equal in standing and influence. To accomplish these desirable, and to our interest and happiness, indispensable objects, we must pursue the same measures

⁸⁴ Samuel Cornish, ed., "Elevation of Our People," *The Colored American* 3, no. 35 (November 23, 1839): 2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

which they have done. We must avail ourselves of all the means of public and private education.⁸⁶

This editorial is significant because it predates the Civil War and the end of slavery by more than two decades. There was no formalized system of education for Negroes at that time. The editorial presented an ambitious challenge to say the least. One of the aspects that classified the Negroes' pursuit of elevation was the ability to be optimistic (or faithful) without doubt or hesitation. Those espousing racial uplift were not just optimistic, but confident and persuasive in their writing and speech – attempting to capture and engage the attention of the Negro and spur them on to action. There are two authors who contributed a series of articles for the *Colored American* espousing their views on racial uplift and self-determination. These articles were representative of the articles that many other individuals contributed on similar topics.

Cushing was one of those advocates for elevation who was optimistic, persuasive in thought and word, and confident. As noted earlier Cushing contributed a series of six articles titled “Means of Elevation” to the *Colored American*.⁸⁷ He had what I believe to be an engaging style of writing. He typically asked permission or provided thanks for being allowed to write, he then wrote with both empathy and passionate fervor, and ended with an apology for having taken up so much time and space. His writing seemed to convey not only the optimistic faith needed to plan for racial elevation, but he also drew the reader in to embrace his message, sometimes chastised their inappropriate

⁸⁶ Author unknown, “The Means of Our Elevation,” *The Colored American* 3, no. 7 (February 23, 1839): 3.

⁸⁷ The series of articles written by Cushing are used in this section as an example of how racial uplift and self-determination were written and spoken about. In his articles, Cushing discussed the main foci of racial uplift as they were also espoused by other individuals and organizations throughout the 19th century.

behavior, and compelled them to make a change in their lives towards elevation.

Cushing's first article in the series was on how and why religion was essential to the elevation of the Negro.

In every nation or country, civilized or barbarous, since the creation of the world, no one subject has received a greater share of attention than that of *religion*. It seems implanted in our very nature, that we are all subject to the dispensations of some mighty power, and we almost instinctively pay our religious adoration, either to the one great Invisible, or some earth-born creature deluded of man. To colored Americans, especially, the subject of religion is one of paramount importance. Deprive them of its promises and consolations, and all that is worth living for, all that renders existence tolerable, is taken away, and their case is indeed hopeless. I might proceed at length, to show that without religion, pure and undefiled, to begin with, all their most strenuous exertions to effect their morsel and political elevation, will be unavailing. With it, although their present condition be one of abject misery, they will be cheered onward through life with the hope of a brilliant final reward, and a release from all their trials and persecutions.⁸⁸

In his writing Cushing also displayed the two aspects of uplift – away from oppression and towards intellectual, social, economic, and moral equality that is part of the philosophical underpinnings of the Age of Enlightenment.⁸⁹ This particular series of articles fervently stated what Negro people needed in order to improve their standing in society. This was true even when Cushing espoused means of elevation other than religion. On the subject of industry as a means towards elevation he wrote:

Perhaps nothing contributes more essentially to the prosperity of a people, than *industry*. The man who toils from day to day for a subsistence, is viewed with as much consideration and respect by every enlightened individual, as he who rolls in abundance. Nothing can be more utterly absurd than to suppose that there is anything at all disreputable in being obliged to earn one's bread by the "sweat of his brow." Colored people,

⁸⁸ Cushing, "Means of Elevation – No. 1," *The Colored American* 3 (June 8, 1839): 2-3.

⁸⁹ See the discussion on pages 40-41 about self-determination and the American Enlightenment.

both individually and as a body, have a great need for the practice of industry. Their peculiar situation, and the oppression under which they suffer demand that certain measures should be immediately taken for the removal and redress of their wrongs, and the most efficient of these measures, is industry....In concluding these remarks, I would particularly urge upon colored youth the great importance of embracing every opportunity which may be presented, for the acquirement of good and useful trades; and, after they shall have been so fortunate as to secure any opportunity of so doing, that they practice rigid economy, and unceasing industry.⁹⁰

Cushing seemed to combine the techniques of an intellectual lecture with a rousing sermon in order to call attention to the plight of the Negro and to motivate them to action(s) that would lead to elevation.

Cushing's series of articles appears to be one of the earliest examples of an articulate, confident, passionate instructional call for Negroes to work towards racial uplift. Throughout the early decades of the Negro newspapers, contributors used a scholarly as well as a sermon-like prose in order to define the path towards racial uplift and to encourage Negroes to build and walk upon that path. Negro newspapers would be used before and after the Civil War to express the urgent need Negro leaders felt to improve the living conditions of the Negro in America.

Racial Uplift, Self-Determination, and National Conventions and Organizations.

In 1963, Meier wrote that racial uplift and self-determination were part of a "larger complex of ideas . . . based on the assumption that by the acquisition of wealth and morality – attained largely by their own efforts – Negroes would gain the respect of white men and thus be accorded their rights as citizens."⁹¹ One of the methods that Negroes

⁹⁰ Cushing, "Means of Elevation – No. V," *The Colored American* 3 (September 28, 1839): 2.

⁹¹ Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 42.

used to organize and to disseminate the message and ideals of racial uplift and self-determination was that of conventions.⁹² The first of these Negro conventions was held in 1831 in Philadelphia and was called the *First Annual Convention of the People of Colour*. While the name of this convention changed slightly over the years, it met annually through 1835 and resumed again in 1843.⁹³

Meier also wrote that the “significance of the conventions derives from the fact that ordinarily they were attended and managed by the most distinguished leaders of the race – important clerics, editors, businessmen, orators, and, after the fourteenth amendment, officeholders.”⁹⁴ Over the years the conventions discussed issues such as the abolishment of slavery, anti-colonization, discrimination in the North, and even formed an American Moral Reform Society at the 1835 convention, as a means “to improve the condition of our people.”⁹⁵ One of the critiques of the conventions is that after they adjourned, no further actions were taken.⁹⁶ This is an issue that arose while researching chapter four of this dissertation as well. The unfinished work of Negroes during this era in history is an issue that may be connected to their inability to always act

⁹² Cooper, “Elevating the Race: The Social Thought of Black Leaders,” 609-619; Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 4-10 and 69-71; and Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 102-103.

⁹³ The convention was also called the *Annual Convention for the Improvement of the Free People of Colour in These United States* and the *National Convention of Colored Citizens*. Cooper, “Elevating the Race,” 609-610.

⁹⁴ Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 4.

⁹⁵ Cooper, “Elevating the Race,” 609-610.

⁹⁶ Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 103.

in a self-determining manner because of racial and economic restrictions. It is a situation that is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but does warrant more exploration.

Racial Uplift, Self-Determination and the Negro Church. While there were many laypeople who led conventions and edited newspapers, Negro ministers rose to become the prominent and consistent leaders in espousing the ideals of racial uplift and self-determination and the Negro church became the leading institution for promoting those beliefs.⁹⁷ The Free African Society (FAS) founded by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones is the earliest recognized organization to assist in not only promoting, but also in practicing racial uplift and self-determination. The FAS will be discussed in chapter three as an example of Richard Allen and the values he set forth for the A.M.E. Church; it is also, however, an example of community organization and the efforts of the Negro people to create a system of mutually beneficial activities. Self-determination and uplift of the race were shown through the fact that members of the FAS were required to make monthly monetary contributions and the fact that in order to remain in good standing and be eligible for the receipt of benefits, individuals were held to strict behavioral and moral codes of conduct. While FAS seemed to have been merged into the establishment of the Negro independent church movement, it still stands as a prominent example of self-determination.

⁹⁷ E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* with C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Church since Frazier* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974); C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990); Meier, *Negro Thought in America*; Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*; and Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983).

As mentioned earlier, one of the aspects that contrasted the racial uplift efforts of the North from those of the South was that element of self-determination. Self-determination also distinguishes racial uplift by and for Negroes from the racial uplift that whites participated in on behalf of and for Negroes. In an article for the *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, S.R. Ward (an A.M.E. minister) wrote about the importance of not just racial elevation, but emphasized the element of self-determination.

Every day brings with it renewed evidence of the truthfulness of the sentiment, now, in various quarters, gaining the confidence and sympathy of our oppressed people, THAT OUR ELEVATION, AS A RACE, IS ALMOST WHOLLY DEPENDENT UPON OUR OWN EXERTIONS. If we are ever elevated, our elevation will have been accomplished through our own instrumentality. . . . No people that has solely depended upon foreign aid, or rather, upon the efforts of those, in any way identified with the oppressor, to undo the heavy burdens, ever stood forth in the attitude of freedom.⁹⁸

Ward did not delve into the specifics of how to pursue racial elevation. He did emphasize that it had to come through self-help and self-determination. Ward even went so far as to warn that waiting on or asking for the help of the white man (the oppressor) was futile because history had shown that the oppressor rarely, if ever, helped those whom he had oppressed. What is interesting about the rhetoric of self-help is that it rarely came with specific instructions or guidelines as to how to proceed in these efforts. Negro churches took up collections, which got divided into the various missions of the church (education, widow's fund, ministers' and bishops' pay, missionary to Africa, etc), but because the money collected was never a sum large enough to cover all necessary expenses, self-help was often more of an ideal rather than a fully realized actuality.

⁹⁸ S.R. Ward, "Self-Elevation," *Frederick Douglass' Paper* 57, no. 17 (April 13, 1855): n.p. Capitalization is that of the original author.

This hope of racial uplift contrasted with what actually got accomplished is a continuing sub-theme in the rhetoric of racial uplift. Decades of slavery put the Negroes at a distinct disadvantage as they struggled to improve their living conditions. Building organizations and institutions took money, which the Negro did not have a lot of. The dichotomy of hope versus reality was one of the major challenges Negroes faced in creating and then maintaining their organizations, publications, and institutions. However, within the context of black religious rhetoric it is clear that hope as a means to encourage and motivate people to accomplish their goals was appropriate.

Hence the black church was central to the expression of racial uplift. Quarles described the significance of blacks having their own church as opposed to attending a predominantly white church as “the opportunity for self-expression and the assurance that he would not be set apart as unwanted.”⁹⁹ The following two chapters provide historical context and detail about the creation of the black church as an institution and the founding of the A.M.E. Church in 1787 under the direction of Richard Allen. For now it will be sufficient to note that the establishing of the A.M.E. Church was a result of free Negroes and former African slaves to express their desire to have a place in which they could worship freely. Richard Allen’s establishment of Bethel A.M.E. Church spoke to this need for Negroes to express themselves freely and worship without interruption or chastisement. Allen, as founder and pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church, rose to become one of the most well-known and respected leaders in the Negro community. He organized and was president of the first national Negro convention held in 1830, which was an entity not directly related to the A.M.E. Church.

⁹⁹ Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 99.

Allen's efforts towards racial uplift and self-determination continued to be built upon long after his death. By separating from the predominantly white Methodist Church, Allen planted the seed for the Negro to assertively seek equal treatment. Benjamin Arnett, an A.M.E. bishop is quoted as once saying that the A.M.E. Church "had its general and specific purposes. The general purpose was to assist in bringing the world to the foot of the cross of Christ, and the special was to assist in relieving the African race from physical, mental, and moral bondage."¹⁰⁰ Even though the A.M.E. Church typically took a stand against unequal treatment of the Negro and other mistreated groups and wrote about such issues in their periodicals, there is not a clearly articulated and unified position on human rights and equality. Because the church's two main periodicals did not begin publication until 1856, it is not evident what the church's stance was on racial uplift before then. Individual members or clergy did write opinion pieces in other newspapers, but it cannot be said with certainty that these individuals represented some agreed upon position of the church.¹⁰¹ Despite the fact that the A.M.E. Church's philosophy on racial uplift was not always clear nor consistently advocated by all its members and clergy, among Negro churches, the A.M.E. Church is recognized as the pioneer in church-based racial uplift and self-determination efforts. "Influenced by politics, racism, and religion, leaders within the A.M.E. hierarchy developed an

¹⁰⁰ Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought*, 2.

¹⁰¹ As will be discussed in the following chapters, there was much argument about almost any philosophical position the Church was attempting to create and promote. This is clearly shown in the fight to promote higher education and create institutions of higher learning. The arguments may be typical of organizations nationally and worldwide, but the arguments definitely make it more challenging to capture a unified stance on any particular issue within the A.M.E. Church. I attempt to resolve this challenge by using the position of the most prominent Church leaders at any given point in time.

intellectual activism that sought to expose and counter many of the prevalent racial assumptions that characterized people of color as inferior and incapable of self-determination.”¹⁰²

According to the A.M.E. Church annual conference minutes and articles published in the Negro newspapers it is evident that members and clergy continued to debate amongst themselves and with others outside of the church all of the possible philosophical positions and consequences of the issue of racial uplift. Whatever the philosophical debate and political and social implications, racial uplift had to also have theological relevance for the A.M.E. Church.

Given what I have read about Richard Allen, Daniel Payne, and the Bishops that presided over the church in the years from its founding until the creation of Wilberforce University, I will contend that if a theological perspective of racial uplift were to be assigned to the A.M.E. Church it would be that of a social gospel perspective. Even though the Social Gospel Movement did not become a prominent theological concept until the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, its ideological underpinnings hold relevance for the A.M.E. Church and racial uplift.

The Social Gospel Movement applies Christian principles to social problems, especially poverty, inequality, liquor, crime, racial tensions, slums, bad hygiene, poor schools, and the danger of war.¹⁰³ The connection between the principles of the Social Gospel Movement and the desires and actions of the A.M.E. Church are not only evidenced in the articles written and submitted to the Negro newspapers, but also in the

¹⁰² Little, *Disciples of Liberty*, xiii.

¹⁰³ Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought*, 310-315.

speeches given at the A.M.E. conferences. Any mention of racial elevation and future work also included either a quotation from the Bible, a reminder of duty and responsibility to God. The most skilled of A.M.E. orators carefully weaved secular and theological thoughts into their advocacy of racial elevation. In his 1884 address to the Church Daniel Payne spoke against the “blasphemous spirit of American slavery and American caste” and of the need for the A.M.E. Church to be created because of the hypocrisy of slave-owning M.E. Church members and clergy.¹⁰⁴

Payne continued to fervently weave the secular call to racial uplift with the spiritual and moral obligation to God. And like many of the sermons and speeches coming out of the A.M.E. Church, Payne’s speech praised what the A.M.E. Church had done; upon first reading his speech I was reminded of the prose and poems we were required to read in high school – full of vivid language with hidden meanings and double entendres.

These two evils, viz: slavery and caste, being as active in the North as in the South, the thoughtful among the hated race found an asylum in the bosom of the A.M.E. Church. They found more; they found freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action, freedom for the development of a true Christian manhood, which though not highly polished, was yet more energetic for that very circumstance – better fitted to suffer hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. This Church is never to be disbanded, because it was not made like the others for a particular time, nor a particular privileged race. No! Thank God, it was made for all times and for all the races – not for colored men, nor for white men; but for humanity. As the future history of races and all nationalities must be in many important aspects, unlike their past, so, also must the future development of the A.M.E. Church be unlike its past. *Like all American Churches, the A.M.E. Church is a race Church.* The ultimate development and perfection of the Church of the living God will not be on the plan of race; but on the plane of humanity. All the present ecclesiastical organizations in America must either leap upon that plane or be swept out

¹⁰⁴ Daniel Alexander Payne, “Thoughts about the Past, the Present and the Future of the African M.E. Church,” *The A.M.E. Church Review* (July 1884): n.p.

of the way of Christian progress. The non-progressive Churches, being obstacles of this progress, will be annihilated to make room and clear the track for such as are progressive according to the Christian law and the Christian spirit, but as that law and that spirit ignore persons, so also they will ignore races.¹⁰⁵

There were many A.M.E. ministers, who later became bishops of the Church, who also served as politicians. A.M.E. ministers worked tirelessly towards securing equal rights for Negroes; this was one manner in which this group of men participated in racial uplift. Within the A.M.E. Church different ministers held different perspectives on achieving racial uplift and self-determination. These different perspectives reflected the differences of opinion among the general Negro population and other Negro leaders, as the following examples illustrate. Some A.M.E. ministers advocated for integration into the American society, stressing the importance of integrated schools and participation in the economy and politics. Other ministers believed that the situation for Negroes in America was so dire that nothing much would change to favor the Negro and thus, Negroes should migrate to Africa, in particular Liberia. One such minister with the latter perspective was Henry Turner.¹⁰⁶

Turner was an A.M.E. minister preaching in Baltimore and later was appointed a bishop in 1880. He was appointed as the first Negro army chaplain and after the war entered Georgia politics. Turner served as a member of the Georgia state legislature until

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Henry McNeal Turner was a bishop in the A.M.E. Church. He was considered controversial because of his views on emigration to Africa and his belief in reparations for slavery. His “theology culminated almost a hundred years of black theological reflection on the origin, destiny, and responsibility of blacks to demand their God-given rights in the United States. . . .” Gayraud Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People* (New York: Orbis Books, 1983), 113-115 and 122-127.

the Negro members of the Georgia legislature were expelled in 1868.¹⁰⁷ After leaving the Georgia state legislature and before becoming an A.M.E. bishop, Turner became an advocate of emigration and was elected vice-president of the American Colonization Society. He truly believed that Negroes could do more for themselves in Africa than they could in America. He felt the government was not supporting the rights of the Negro especially after the Civil Rights Decision of 1883.¹⁰⁸ The following year, in response to the Supreme Court's decision Turner wrote a letter to the members and ministers of the Eight Episcopal District:

A terrible crisis is upon us; heaven is insulted, our civilization is disgraced! The Supreme Court of the United States has decided that the Civil Rights act is unconstitutional. To the negro in this country (excepting a few simpletons, ingrates and government pap suckers) this decision is known to be a fearful blow, a civil shame, an inhuman outlaw, upon more than seven millions of American citizens--citizens, too, who have freely shed their blood in every battle the nation has fought for its maintenance since its incipency. This is not a political question. It involves existence,

¹⁰⁷ During Reconstruction there were a large number of black men who entered Georgia politics. Between 1867 and 1872 sixty-nine African Americans served as delegates to the constitutional convention (1867-68) or as members of the state legislature. Twenty-four legislators were ministers. Turner was a delegate to the Georgia constitutional convention of 1867 and was elected to two terms in the Georgia legislature, beginning in 1868; but in September 1868 the legislature, dominated by Republicans, expelled its African American members. The black legislators, led by Turner, successfully lobbied the federal government to reseat them. Conservatives used terror, intimidation, and the Ku Klux Klan to "redeem" the state. One quarter of the black legislators were killed, threatened, beaten, or jailed. In the December 1870 elections the Democrats won an overwhelming victory. Edmund L. Drago. *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia: A Splendid Failure* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992).

¹⁰⁸ On October 15, 1883, the Supreme Court overturned the Civil Rights Act of 1875, declaring it unconstitutional. Turner wrote a response to this decision entitled "The Barbarous Decision of the United States Supreme Court Declaring the Civil Rights Act Unconstitutional and Disrobing the Colored Race of All Civil Protection. The Most Cruel and Inhuman Verdict Against a Loyal People in the History of the World. Also the Powerful Speeches of Hon. Frederick Douglass and Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, Jurist and Famous Orator." (Atlanta, GA 1893).

fundamental rights upon which hinges respect, honor, happiness and all that life is worth. Born in the bitterness of prejudice, fostered in the venom of caste, and strengthened by the dangerous stimulants of State rights, that decision hurls out fearful blows, which strike the Negro through in the very armor of his citizenship. The assault, too, was unprovoked; yet such has been its force, that it will materially curtail the growth of race respect, and drive us into the thorns and briars of incessant discontent or recognized inferiority to the most degraded of all other races, the very thought of which is revolting. That decision beggars the future hopes of the Negro, destroys his confidence in his own country and makes him an alien in the land of his birth --a land which he has enriched by his labor and defended with his life. It makes his color a badge of inferiority and robs him of that manly zeal which is born of fair rivalry. This decision, too, has been made despite the plain wording of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, and the vote of the entire country in 1872, when all political parties voted for platforms providing for civil rights. The decision is not only a calamity, but it is unwarranted and was uncalled for. The Negro was quietly, peaceably, industriously, hopefully and loyally enjoying his battle-won freedom, and was modestly working out his destiny. He had gained the admiration of his friends, and was fast achieving the respect of his foes. . . . The white citizens were becoming satisfied and the black contented. Prosperity was a vital fact, a positive reality and peace a national benediction. . . . This decision reverses the wheels of civilization. The lower elements of our natures are turned loose to war and collide with the higher. . . . The nation has been transformed into a mob, with Judge Bradley as its leader, and tens of thousands of its faithful defenders have been handed over to its vengeance and fury. . . . Now, before the God of nations and civilized man, we hold that the action of the Supreme Court is nothing less than a public outrage, and an invitation to murder all colored persons who possess the elements of true manhood--a decision far more abominable and more at variance with the true status of affairs than the Dred Scott decision, and as such should be singled out before heaven and earth.¹⁰⁹

Turner urged the members and ministers to gather in prayer and protest until Congress passed another bill that would grant Negroes protection of their freedom.

¹⁰⁹ Henry McNeal Turner, *Civil Rights. The Outrage of the Supreme Court of the United States upon the Black Man. Reviewed in Reply to the New York "Voice," The Great Temperance Paper of the United States* (Philadelphia, PA: The Publication Department of the A.M.E. Church, 1889), 14-15. This speech was also printed in the *Christian Recorder* on January 17, 1884.

Turner eventually left the U.S. to live in Liberia, and in 1892 wrote that the “one thing that black man has here, that is manhood, freedom, and the fullest liberty; and feels as a lord and walks the same way.” Meier contends that “the majority of articulate Negroes definitely opposed emigration as a solution to the race problem, and that highly distinguished Negroes did not favor colonization,”¹¹⁰ so in that sense Turner could be labeled as unusual for an A.M.E. minister (and later bishop) in his support of migration, although he was not alone in his views.

Another A.M.E. minister, later appointed bishop, who also supported the emigration movement was Richard H. Cain. Beginning in 1880, Richard H. Cain served as a bishop in the A.M.E. Church. Cain served four years in the South Carolina Senate and two years in the House of Representatives. Cain was a leader in the South Carolina Liberian Exodus Association and a proponent of migration to Liberia. He believed that the situation in South Carolina was so dire for Negroes that they should migrate to Africa.¹¹¹

Some of the ministers who were proponents of racial uplift did not necessarily speak about what should be done and engage in debate about how to uplift the race, but through their actions showed how racial uplift could be accomplished; they led by example. One such Negro leader was Benjamin Arnett. In 1888, Arnett became a bishop in the A.M.E. Church and served as one of the editors of the *Christian Recorder*. Prior to his service as a bishop, he served a term in the Ohio state legislature where he participated in introducing and passing the Civil Rights Act of 1886, and in obtaining the

¹¹⁰ Meier, *Negro Thought in America*, 65 and 66.

¹¹¹ Richard R. Wright, *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (The A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1963), 119-122.

repeal of the Black Laws in 1886.¹¹² He advocated for integrated schools and supported the self-help philosophy which is one of the pillars of racial uplift.

Benjamin Tucker Tanner was another minister and later bishop in the A.M.E. Church. He edited the *Recorder* from 1868-1884 and the *A.M.E. Church Review* from 1884-1888). Tanner wrote *An Apology for African Methodism* in which he defended the Church against critics and argued that the forming of the A.M.E. Church was an act towards freedom for blacks from continued oppression.¹¹³ The A.M.E. ministers were not alone in espousing the philosophy of self-determination and racial uplift. Generally speaking, the most noted leaders of the first organized Negro church denominations advocated racial uplift and self-determination in some form or another. (J.W. Hood of the A.M.E. Zion, L.H. Holsey of the C.M.E., and E.C. Morris of the National Baptist Convention).¹¹⁴

One of the major ways in which the A.M.E. Church sought to implement racial uplift and self-determination was through the establishment of schools. While the

¹¹² Black Laws or black codes as they were commonly called refers to the Southern state legislatures passing laws that “relegated blacks to a status somewhere between slave and free; these codes typically restricted blacks’ occupations, ownership of property, and access to the judicial system and contained provisions that enabled officials to impose forced labor on ‘vagrants’ who ‘loitered’ or lacked employment as well as on children whose parents were unable to support them,” Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 209-210.

¹¹³ Wright, *The Bishops of the A.M.E. Church*, 323-326.

¹¹⁴ James W. Hood, *One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church* (New York: A.M.E. Zion Book Concern, 1895); Lucius Henry Holsey, *Autobiography, Sermons, Addresses, and Essays of Bishop L.H. Holsey* (Atlanta, Georgia: Franklin Print and Publishing Co., 1898); and E.C. Morris *Sermons, Addresses, and Reminiscences and Important Correspondence with Picture Gallery of Eminent Ministers and Scholars* (Nashville, Tennessee: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1901). In their books all three ministers include sermons which they preached or speeches which they gave that promote education and self-determination along with equal rights.

A.M.E. Church established various schools that ranged from Bible study to basic grammar to advanced studies for the more literate Negroes, the focus of this study is on the A.M.E. Church's efforts in establishing institutions of higher education.¹¹⁵ Even though the focus of this dissertation is on institutions of higher education, it is necessary to paint a picture of the connection between racial uplift, self-determination, and education in general for Negroes.

Racial Elevation, Self-Help and Negro Education. This section is intended to provide a general discussion of the connection between the importance of Negro education and racial uplift. The following chapter provides greater details about the creation of institutions of education for and by Negroes.

Elevation, we must be elevated! Are we to be ignorant all our lives? Are we to be uneducated? Our children to grow up in ignorance when now there are such great inducements open for our education – for our children's education? Are we to be always a low, poor, and degraded class? Will our future be judged by men of what the past has been? You say, no! then we must be elevated. We must educate ourselves, and our children. We must commence now, and show those who call themselves our superiors, that we are their equals. That we are men among men.¹¹⁶

In this editorial the author labeled ignorance a cruel monster and implored that the highest aim of the Negro should be to obtain education. The author wrote directly to the parents and urged them to send their children to school and echoing the sentiment of Samuel Cornish, encouraged that they read outside of school.¹¹⁷ Many parents were in

¹¹⁵ The difference in these various types of schooling is discussed in chapter four.

¹¹⁶ Chas F. Christy, "Elevation of the Colored Man!" *The Christian Recorder* 6, no. 49 (December 8, 1866): 2.

¹¹⁷ Reading and literacy would be an issue that the A.M.E. Church would struggle with for decades. Low literacy rates and/or unwillingness to read independently would cause many of its publication efforts to shut down or to have low member readership for those that did survive.

the habit of pulling their children out of school (perhaps to work on the family farm or obtain a job to help bring income into the household) and the author criticized this because the activities that the school drop-outs engaged in were counter-productive to racial elevation.

I know of parents, who have prosperous looking sons, intelligent daughters, when they spend a year or two at school, take them away, or they come away of their own accord. Their sons go into barbershop, or to some hotel, and their daughters are left at home to adorn society or to entertain company. . . .¹¹⁸

This could be a difficult choice for parents to make. Racial uplift did not come without sacrifices. If a child was old enough to attend school then he or she was probably old enough to work at some type of job that could help supplement the family income. Education was not always seen as a financially good decision, especially for poor families, which constituted the majority of the Negro population because education was costly, engaging in schooling took time away from employment, and even when educated there was no guarantee of finding a job that would justify the time and money spent on the education received. This is in part how the debate between industrial training and liberal arts education began (the A.M.E. Church's participation in this debate is will be discussed later in chapter four).¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸Christy, "Elevation of the Colored Man!"

¹¹⁹ I believe that the liberal arts versus industrial training arguments manifested in many ways. In some ways this argument between allowing or demanding that children work versus sending them off to school is part of that educational philosophy battle between liberal arts and industrial training. In a simplified explanation (as it relates to racial uplift), the controversy was about what would be most helpful to the Negroes – having skills in order to secure a job or having a liberal arts education, which theoretically symbolized the opportunity for a better job. Industrial training provided a tangible (or at least visible) result, whereas a liberal arts education provided a commodity that was not as easy to grasp. Manual training or working versus attending school catered to the notion that Negroes were only good for or capable of manual labor, this would be

Dating back to 1831, Negroes in the United States had attempted to create and fund institutions of learning for Negro children and youth. The first Northern attempt of an institution of learning being created by Negroes for Negroes was voted upon favorably at the *National Negro Convention*. The school was planned for New Haven, Connecticut, but that community rejected the proposal.¹²⁰ The debate of separate institutions of learning for Negroes was waged for two years within the convention halls. In 1833, The New England Project proposed an inter-racial school to be built in Caanan, New Hampshire – Noyes Academy. This too unfortunately failed – “the good people of that Northern community, having waited until the colored students were enrolled, hitched up their oxen and dragged the building from its foundation.”¹²¹

Between 1831 and the time Wilberforce was purchased, the leaders of the A.M.E. Church vigorously debated the benefits of education for its ministry and congregants. The details of these discussions are provided in chapter three. Suffice it to say that by 1866, Wilberforce University had been in existence for ten years and the A.M.E. Church

counter-productive to racial uplift, whereas a liberal arts education or attending school proved that Negroes were capable of intellectual learning, more in alignment with racial uplift. The contrasting perspectives on education are presented in works such as James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South: 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Linda Buchanan and Philo Hutcheson, “Re-Considering the Washington-DuBois Debate: Two Black Colleges in 1910-1911,” in *Southern Education in the 20th Century: Exceptionalism and its Limits*, ed. Wayne Urban (New York: Garland Press, 1999), 77-99; and Jacqueline M. Moore, *Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and the Struggle for Racial Uplift* (Lanham, Maryland: S.R. Books/Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).

¹²⁰ See Hilary J. Moss, “Education’s Inequity: Opposition to Black Higher Education in Antebellum Connecticut,” *History of Education Quarterly*, 46, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 16-35.

¹²¹ Howard Bell, “Free Negroes in the North: 1830-1835” *Journal of Negro Education* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 1957): 451.

operated several common schools. Education was being touted as not only the way to elevate or uplift or improve the race, but also as the way to prove to others (white people) that Negroes could be prosperous and intelligent. “Make yourselves a prosperous race, let everybody know that you can and will do.”¹²² Racial uplift and self-determination were expressed in a variety of ways, but for the most prominent Negro leaders (who typically lived in the North and had formal schooling), the rhetoric usually boiled down to obtaining an education, which would lead to obtaining a career, which would help to place the Negro on a more equal plane with the white man. However making comparisons between the Negro and the white man could lead to disappointment, even anger or frustration, because the two groups of people had obviously started their lives in America quite differently. Many Negro leaders would remind their community that they should be proud of what they had accomplished given where it was they had begun, as Richard Wright, Jr. argued:

If it is proper to measure progress by the depth from which one comes as well as by the height which one reaches, the efforts at self-help in education by Negroes deserve praise. Their contributions have been far from adequate for even meager education. . . .¹²³

In this pamphlet Wright gave an overview of the creation and progress of Negro education. He especially highlighted the work of the Negro church in establishing institutions of education. Wright stressed the element of self-determination by stating that the Negroes were taxpayers whose funds factored into the support of education for

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Richard R. Wright, Jr., “Self-help in Negro education,” published by the Committee of Twelve for the advancement of the interests of the Negro race (Cheyney, Pennsylvania), 29. Richard R Wright, Jr. authored several books, was an editor for the *Christian Recorder*, and edited the A.M.E. Church’s centennial encyclopedia (1816-1916).

all children (black and white) even though the white people's tax money did not go to support the Negro schools. The Negroes were proving themselves to be self-sufficient as well as responsible citizens:

It is very evident from the above calculations that the Negroes are in no sense a burden upon the white taxpayers. . . . In most of the states Negroes paid taxes, thus aiding in the education of white children, but in very few of them did they receive any aid from the public for the education of their own children.¹²⁴

This of course was a constant battle that Negroes had to wage. Their schools were not equally funded or supported therefore the Negro schools were consistently struggling to survive. The struggle for survival of Negro schools will be revisited in chapter three and four when the creation of the A.M.E. Church's institutions of higher education is discussed.

A Final Note on Racial Uplift and Self-Determination

We must be united in spirit and sentiment, in maintaining the rights and elevation of our people, in this, their native land, and upon the importance and magnitude of the work – we must be intent upon the main object before us. We must unite upon the end in view, without regard to class, condition, sect or party, and should all sympathize together as common sufferers and maintain a united and uncompromising sentiment upon this common object.¹²⁵

Building upon the principles of the American Enlightenment era, free Negroes and their white supporters set about building the social, economic, and intellectual life for the Negroes which had been stolen from them as they were enslaved for several decades.

While American was still claiming for itself freedom from Great Britain and building its

¹²⁴ Ibid., 16 and 6.

¹²⁵ Author Unknown, "Future Prospects and Rise of Our People," *The Colored American* 2 (April 24, 1841): 2.

nations institutions, the Negroes also were claiming their freedom from slavery and building their institutions. And while every Negro may not have claimed to be a Christian, the Negro Church and religion played a central role in the building of the Negro communities after slavery.

The black church was in fact the primary vehicle for the exercise of black agency, a place where the humanity of America's darker "citizens" was acknowledged and basic human aspirations for self-determination were achieved.¹²⁶

Faith, the unquestioning belief that individually and as a people Negroes could obtain intellectual, social, economic, and moral equality with the white man, led the Negroes to work towards those goals. Richard Allen as the leader of the A.M.E. Church was by far the best example of that time of someone living and leading by faith. Daniel Payne pushed the racial uplift and self-help ideals even further and took bold steps that propelled the A.M.E. Church into the spotlight as a pioneer organization of this rhetoric. Both men are the subject of chapters three and four.

¹²⁶ Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., *Exodus! Religion, Race, and Nation in Early Nineteenth-Century Black America* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 18.

CHAPTER THREE
OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE NEGRO CHURCH AND
NEGRO COLLEGES

*My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus name.
On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking,
All other ground is sinking sand.¹²⁷*

Introduction and Overview

Scholars of the Negro Church have written that this institution (the Negro Church) was the most stable and significant institution for Negroes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹²⁸ From the Negro Church grew Negro schools, Negro colleges and

¹²⁷ *The Solid Rock*, words by Edward Mote, circa 1834. This hymn is classified as a hymn of grace (thankful and humble acknowledgement). Traditional Christian hymns unlike Negro spirituals have less of a coded or hidden meaning. Christian hymns are typically written for a specific purpose – praise, adoration, prayer, or thanksgiving, and are addressed specifically to God or other significant religious figure (i.e. Virgin Mary). There are also hymns written for specific celebrations during the Christian calendar – Christmas, Easter, advent, lent, eucharist, or a baptism. (James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson. *The Books of American Negro Spirituals*, Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 1969). I chose this hymn to begin this chapter as a reminder that while the A.M.E. Church created educational institutions, the focus of the leaders never strayed far from their religious duty to God and they aimed to always keep Christ as the foundation and center of their efforts. This can and will be seen in subsequent chapters through the words of church leaders such as Richard Allen and Daniel Payne.

¹²⁸ E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* with C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Church since Frazier* (Schocken Books: New York, 1974); and C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Duke University Press: Durham, North Carolina, 1990). Additionally, the term Negro Church

universities, and other Negro institutions and organizations such as fraternities and sororities. Negro churches and Negro educational institutions have been the foundation for the self-determination and racial uplift efforts of the Negro people. The African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and its institutions have long stood as the first example of Negro religion and education. But before I can tell the story of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and its colleges, it is necessary to set historical context and provide a brief overview as to why the establishment of this church and its educational institutions is so historically and culturally significant given the conditions of enslavement. For some it is a painful and disgusting part of United States history and for others it is simply a fact of the development of this nation. Whichever perspective one chooses to take, the fact remains that the United States of America practiced at least two hundred years of forced labor, also known as slavery.

Although Americans like to think that the United States was “conceived in liberty,” the reality is somewhat different. Almost from the beginning, America was heavily dependent on coerced labor, and by the early eighteenth century slavery, legal in all of British America, was the dominant labor system of the Southern colonies. Most of the Founding Fathers were large-scale slave owners. During the century and a half between the arrival of twenty blacks in Jamestown in 1619 and the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1776, slavery – nonexistent in

as used in this dissertation is utilized as defined by Lincoln and Mamiya to represent “a kind of sociological and theological shorthand reference to the pluralism of black Christian churches in the United States, and is limited to those independent, historic, and totally black controlled denominations, which were founded after the Free African Society of 1787 and which constituted the core of black Christians,” 1. Estimating that more than eighty percent of all black Christians belong to one of seven denominations, Lincoln and Mamiya’s study identifies those denominations – the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church; the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. Z.) Church; the Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church; the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated (NBC); the National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated (NBCA); the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). This dissertation focuses primarily on the A.M.E. Church with comparisons made to other historically Negro Methodist denominations.

England itself – spread through all the English colonies that would soon become the United States. It grew like cancer. . . .During the eighteenth century, slavery became entrenched as a pervasive – and in many colonies central – component of the social order.¹²⁹

Across the world slavery varied greatly in terms of gender and ethnicity. In the British colonies the practice of forced labor began with indentured servants who were generally poor Europeans who could not afford their passage to America or criminals serving a sentence. Their servitude was limited (four to five years for adults), and indentured servitude status was not passed down to their offspring. Initially the Portuguese and the Dutch dominated the African slave trade, therefore, other than the native Indians, up until the 1680s the population of the British colonies remained mostly white. Several factors contributed to the importation of Africans to the colonies as slaves. From 1650 to 1750, the number of indentured servants migrating to American decreased while the population

¹²⁹ Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 3-4 and 24-27. The issue of slavery in the Northern states proved to be a bit more complicated. Litwack provides a Northern perspective of slavery, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1961). Litwack writes that in the “complex economy and uncongenial climate of the North, slave labor presumably proved to be unprofitable; savage Africans lacked the mental capacity to learn anything more than how to tend a single crop. Climate and geography thus prompted the employing class to turn to the more profitable use of free white laborers, thereby dooming slavery” (Litwack, p. 4). While this provides a somewhat biased perspective against the abilities of Africans, a more accurate reason for why slavery in the Northern colonies did not reach the high proportions that it did in the Southern colonies has more to do with economy than the ability of Africans to tend to crops and learn new tasks. Kolchin writes that although slavery spread throughout the colonies, the type of work slaves did and the nature of slavery varied depending on the regional economy. In the mid-East, slavery began in the “tidewater region of the Chesapeake colonies – Virginia, Maryland, and the northeast corner of North Carolina” where tobacco was cultivated. Slavery “assumed much smaller proportions; slaves served in a variety of capacities, from house service to skilled crafts and day labor, but slavery did not serve as the basis for the economy;” by the middle of the eighteenth century the Northern demand for slavery decreased and by the start of the Revolutionary War, the population of slaves was steadily declining. This factor made it easier to abolish slavery during the last third of the eighteenth century and contributed to the reason why Negroes in the North were able to establish institutions such as churches and schools with relatively more ease than Negroes in the South.

in the colonies and the demand for labor increased. The British navy established the Royal African Company in 1672 for the purposes of slave trading and in 1713, received the right to supply the Spanish colonies with slaves. The British control of slave trading made it easier and cheaper for the landowning colonists to purchase African slaves.¹³⁰ African slaves were “held permanently rather than for a few years, and female slaves passed their status on to their children.”¹³¹ African slaves, because of the color of their skin, provided a reduced risk of flight – they were easier to spot and catch than the Irish immigrants who came over as indentured servants.

The initial demand for labor was color-blind. Once the African slave trade began to grow, so did the negative stereotypes, the stigma, and negative treatment of the Africans. In terms of physical looks, language, and mannerisms, the Africans were more unlike their owners than were the European indentured servants, which led to them being viewed and treated as inferior.¹³²

The Africans who were captured, sold and traded into slavery are often portrayed as ignorant heathens without morals or intellectual capacity. The notion that slaves had no form of religion and/or no schooling of any kind is a false and rampant claim that is perpetuated throughout historical literature.¹³³ Both the issue of how and why Africans

¹³⁰ Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 4-13.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 4-6. In this section of his book, Kolchin is explaining that the owning of slaves was common practice across the world and that the gender, ethnicity, and treatment of slaves varied depending on the country from where the slaves came and to where they were going. In general, slaves had physical differences from their owners which made it easier to create a “us-them” dichotomy.

¹³³ Africans, later known as slaves, are often described as barbaric and uncivilized in much of the historical literature that documents the history of the Negro, Negro

became slaves in the United States and Americans' perception and thus portrayal of slaves stems from a way of thinking and behaving that Philo Hutcheson discusses in his chapter "Shall I Compare Thee?" in Gasman, Baez, and Turner.¹³⁴ Hutcheson explains Hayden White's *Tropics of Discourse* which is about the power of language and naming – those with power get to name (or rename) what is important and valued. Hutcheson uses this work to explain the language used around naming colleges and universities "historically black" or "predominantly white" (Hutcheson prefers a term he coined, "essentially white"). Hutcheson also discusses Henry Louis Gates' work *Loose Canons*, in which Gates uses the term canon to "capture a literature uniquely belonging to the United States" as opposed to literature (or music) native to Africans.¹³⁵ This theoretical

education, and the Negro church. It is worth noting that there seems to be a distinct pattern in that the literature which describes Africans as barbaric and uncivilized is the literature primarily written by White European scholars, especially those White European scholars who lived and wrote in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Scholars and historians of African descent did not tend to use such descriptors. The latter used language that described the African slave and free Negro as intelligent, resourceful, adapting, overcoming, rising above, and making due. The sources I use for this dissertation are good examples of this dichotomy. The firsthand accounts from Daniel Payne and researched works by Negro scholars such as Carter G. Woodson present a view of African slaves as hard-working, intelligent, and resourceful with the ability to overcome the harshness of their situations. The literature from white European scholars, such as Kolchin has some negative references to the physical abilities and mental capacities of African slaves, without a disclaimer or explanatory footnote. While this observation is not true one hundred percent of the time, it is worth noting because the tone of the scholarly work produced varies depending on researcher perspective and the type of sources utilized. It is likely that this dual representation of African slaves and Negroes did not begin to change until 1915 when Carter G. Woodson created the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

¹³⁴ Philo Hutcheson, "Shall I Compare Thee? Reflections on Naming and Power" in Marybeth Gasman, Benjamin Baez, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, eds., *Understanding Minority-Serving Institutions* (State University of New York Press: New York, 2008), 43-54.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

sentiment of not giving credit to Negroes for their unique creations is captured best in the words of Johnson and Johnson who argued that anything the Negro slave created was original and unique.

The statement that the Spirituals are imitations made by the Negro of other music that he heard in an absurdity. What music did American Negroes hear to imitate? They certainly had no opportunity to go to Scotland or Russia or Scandinavia and bring back echoes of songs from those lands. . . . Nobody thought of questioning the Negro's title as creator of this music until its beauty and value were demonstrated. . . . The Spirituals are purely and solely the creation of the American Negro; that is, as much so as any music can be the pure and sole creation of any particular group. And their production, although seemingly miraculous, can be accounted for naturally. The Negro brought with him from Africa his native musical instinct and talent, and that was no small endowment to begin with.¹³⁶

The truth about the era of American slavery and what knowledge, skills, and talents the slaves brought with them from their respective countries is that because we were not there and few complete records exist relating to the lives of the slaves, we may never certainly know what the status of Africans was prior to being captured and sold into slavery. There are however some firsthand accounts that are documented, reporting that the Africans had their own forms of religion, their own forms of schooling, and own concepts of morality and intelligence.¹³⁷ The fact is that many Southern states passed

¹³⁶ Johnson and Johnson, *The Books of American Negro Spirituals*, 15-17.

¹³⁷ One specific account which attests to Africans having a life that included government, schools, religion, and other customs, comes from the "North American Slave Narratives" collection of the University of North Carolina *Documenting the American South* project. In the *Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua, a Native of Zoogoo, in the Interior of Africa* (1854), the author describes a system of government, religion, and schooling along with customs and ceremonies that were followed prior to being captured and sold into North American slavery. From Baquaqua's account it is easy to see how the African's native language and customs were lost. Once the slave ship arrived at its destined port the Africans were bought by different individuals for various kinds of labor. Africans were often sold off more than once and it was not uncommon for a slave to have been owned by two, three, or even four different men. The process of sale and resale only further separated individual Africans from their native country-men and

laws that prohibited the African slaves from gathering together without the permission and/or supervision of their owners. Slaves often met in secrecy anyway as these laws were hard to enforce.¹³⁸ However, since families often were separated due to the selling and buying of slaves, native languages, religions, and other customs were difficult to practice and maintain. Further, while the issue of educating the African slaves was controversial and not advocated by the majority of slave owners and others who advocated slavery, many owners taught their slaves basic reading and writing.¹³⁹ Not being completely literate in the new language of English, not knowing the customs, and being denied the rights of citizens in the developing American society kept the African

from their native language and customs. Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua with Samuel Moore, *Biography of Mahommah G. Baququa, a Native of Zoogoo, in the Interior of Africa* (Geo. E. Pomeroy & Co., Tribune Office: Detroit, 1854). There are many first-hand accounts worth reading, several of which have been scanned and put online by the University of North Carolina for *Documenting the American South* project, <http://docsouth.unc.edu>.

¹³⁸ Kolcin, *American Slavery*, 16-18; 61-62.

¹³⁹ Many feared that promoting literacy among the slaves would fuel the need for independence and encourage slaves to runaway. Some encouraged the reading of the Bible as a way to help civilize the slaves and because by teaching reading and arithmetic, slaves could do some of the business of maintaining their owners' plantations. In some ways taking on the language and customs of the owners was necessary for survival; some viewed this process as the "Americanization" of the slaves and saw it as an abandonment of native African culture. Yet it seems that slaves did what was necessary to stay alive – did what their owners demanded, whether that be learn to read and write and sing Christian hymns; and met in secret to attempt to maintain native culture. Accounts by men such as Daniel Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1888); Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (Boston: Published at the Anti-Slavery Office, 1845); and Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (Garden City: New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1901) are examples of the dual lives that African slaves lived and eventually overcame. Electronic copies of each of these autobiographies were downloaded from <http://www.docsouth.unc.edu> throughout the writing of this dissertation.

slaves subservient and dependent on their white owners and forced them to learn the language and customs of the land in which they now lived.

There is so much that could and has been written about the institution of slavery and its effects on Africans in the United States. This simply is not the dissertation in which this horrific period in our nation's history and its aftermath can be discussed in detail. For these purposes it will suffice to say that the process of capture, transport, sale and resale, enslavement, forced labor, punishment, and dehumanization had more devastating effects than any individual who was not present to witness could even begin to describe or comprehend. In essence, slavery attempted to erase and eradicate Africans of their native social, moral, spiritual, and intellectual customs. Slavery broke native social and familial bonds. From this place in history, people of African descent would build social networks, self-help organizations, churches, and schools.

While the institution of slavery made it extremely difficult, but not impossible for Africans from similar countries and tribes to practice their native languages and customs, the spirit of family and religion still remained ingrained in their hearts and minds, and when given the opportunity Africans adopted ways that allowed them to form community.

It is our position that it was not what remained of African culture or African religious experience but the Christian religion that provided the new basis of social cohesion. . . . Since all forms of organized social effort were forbidden among the slaves and in the absence of an established priesthood, the Negro preacher played the important role in the "invisible institution" of the church among the slaves.¹⁴⁰

Although Christianity may not have been the religion the Africans practiced in their native lands, Frazier argued that once introduced to Christianity the slaves embraced its

¹⁴⁰ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 4 and 24.

tenets and utilized it in assisting them to develop some aspects of social cohesion, spirituality, and hope.

It is evident, then, that the manner in which Negroes were captured and enslaved and inducted into the plantation regime tended to loosen all social bonds among them and to destroy the traditional basis of social cohesion....The possibility of establishing some basis for social cohesion was further reduced because of the difficulty of communication among slaves. If by chance slaves who spoke the same African language were thrown together, it was the policy on the part of the master to separate them....The enslavement of the Negro not only destroyed the traditional African system of kinship and other forms of organized social life.¹⁴¹

Frazier described the efforts of missionaries to bring Christianity to the slaves. Many slaves were allowed to attend worship services with their owners (although they typically sat in the galley or in the upstairs balcony area separate from the whites). The slaves reportedly responded most receptively to the proselytizing efforts of the Baptists and Methodists because these preachers

lacked the education of the ministers of the Anglican church, [and they] appealed to the poor and the ignorant and the outcast. . . .there were numbers of Negroes who found in the fiery message of salvation hope and a prospect of escape from their earthly woes. . . . In the emotionalism of camp meetings and revivals some social solidarity, even if temporary, was achieved. . . . Not only did religion draw the Negroes into a union with their fellow men, it tended to break down barriers that isolated them morally from their white masters.¹⁴²

While there was some fear on the part of white people that introducing the Negroes to the Bible would lead them to contemplate human equality and freedom, they found enough

¹⁴¹ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 11-13.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 15-16. The positive reception of Negroes to the Methodists will be explored further in the next chapter on Richard Allen and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

justification in the New Testament to support slavery and justified that the slaves who read the Bible were more amenable to control by their owners.¹⁴³

Despite the fact that the missionary work of the white preachers continued to perpetuate a system of enslavement, the Negroes were able to adapt the white man's Christianity to their psychological and social needs. It was not long before the slaves created their own songs and nurtured their own preachers.

Since all forms of organized social effort were forbidden among the slaves and in the absence of an established priesthood, the Negro preacher played the important role in the "invisible institution" of the church among the slaves. . . . The Negro preacher among the slaves was more than a leader in these ephemeral gatherings . . . The leadership of the preacher was recognized by his "congregation" and as far as the white masters were willing to concede to him this role among the slaves.¹⁴⁴

The white organizations still maintained complete control over the actions of the Negro preachers until after the Civil War when the Negro church emerged as an independent institution (this will be discussed shortly). The introduction of Christianity to the slaves led to the creation of the Negro Church, which in essence became the first U.S. organized institution among Africans. It was the Negro spirituals and the uplifting, encouraging, inspirational words of Negro preachers that helped to get the Africans from day to day, through the Underground Railroad, and in many instances, safe to freedom. It is the Negro Church which provided the first refuge, the first mutual aid, and the first semblance of organized life outside of slavery. The Negro Church thus set the foundation for the creation of other institutions such as schools.

¹⁴³ Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Press, 1921), 3.

¹⁴⁴ Frazier, *The Negro Church*, 24-25.

The Negro Church

This dissertation is not simply about historically black colleges and universities that were founded by a specific religious denomination, but also about that denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The Negro Church stands as a significant institution because it was often one of the few or only places in which Negroes could seek refuge and assistance, instruction and guidance, and a place in which they could gather and form a community. Lincoln and Mamiya assert that the church was “one of the few stable and coherent institutions to emerge from slavery.”¹⁴⁵ This makes the Negro Church the center of social, cultural, economic, and political activity for Negro Americans.

Christianity is a complex religion that cannot be fully explained in the context of this dissertation. While the principles of Christianity taught that all people are equal, it also was used by slave owners to keep them separate from the slaves. Just as it is difficult to fully discern what languages were spoken, customs practiced, and socio-political-economic statuses held by the Africans before they were enslaved and brought to America; it is equally difficult to discern what religions, if any, were practiced. There is evidence from some Englishmen who traveled to Africa in 1623 that there were people there who used the Bible as the basis of their religious teachings and practices.¹⁴⁶ Being stripped of their native culture, including religion, the Africans adapted to what religion was offered to them. At times it was forced upon them by their slave owners and at

¹⁴⁵ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 7.

¹⁴⁶ Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 22-23.

others the Christian religion was accepted openly and easily. It is indeed a true irony that slaves ended up taking on the religion of the colonizer and in the end the Christian religion and the Negro Church stood as the one constant institution that could bring comfort and support to the then slaves.

The Negro preacher was often the only or one of the few highly educated individuals in the Negro community. He (typically the Negro preacher was male) not only provided spiritual instruction and guidance, but also was the one to read and spread any relevant news (social, economic, or political). The Negro preacher not only led his congregation, but often settled disputes within the community. Additionally, the larger the congregation, the more well-known and more respected the preacher.¹⁴⁷ Often Negro preachers served on many boards of community organizations and even held political office. The earliest examples of the Negro preacher as Negro community leaders leads researchers right to the A.M.E. Church and Richard Allen, who will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Twentieth century examples of the significant influence of the Negro church and preacher can be seen through the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia and through Rev. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York. The history of Negro churches and their leaders is rich in examples of men (and some women) who not only shaped the religious fabric of their communities, but advocated for self-determination and racial uplift and assisted in the process of political, economic, and social change across the United States.

¹⁴⁷ Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 281-285.

The history of Negroes and religion in America has been shaped by the shifting socio-political thought throughout time. Woodson's *The History of the Negro Church*, Frazier's *The Negro Church in America*, and Lincoln and Mamiya's *The Black Church in the African American Experience* all chronicle the journey of slave religion to proselytizing missionaries to organized black church congregations.¹⁴⁸ According to Woodson, prior to the American Revolution, a debate often waged about whether or not slaves should receive instruction in reading the Bible and other Christian traditions. "Unlike the missionaries, the planters were not interested in religion and they felt that too much enlightenment of the slaves might inspire them with the hope of attaining the status of freemen."¹⁴⁹ Missionaries were training Africans and then traveling with them as preachers in Latin America and the Caribbean. This work may have begun as early as 1695 in the United States.¹⁵⁰

As the missionaries traveled throughout America, in particular in the Southern states, two issues caused much debate regarding the Negroes and religion. The first issue concerned the intellectual capacity of the Negro, in particular the slave in the South.

Some difficulty resulted too from the differences of opinion as to what tenets of religion should be taught the Negro and how they should be presented. Should Negroes be first instructed in the rudiments of education and then taught the doctrines of the church or should the missionaries start

¹⁴⁸ Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*; Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*; and Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*.

¹⁴⁹ Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 3.

¹⁵⁰ The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was the main protestant organization doing the missionary work of teaching slaves Christian traditions. The Society was established in London in 1701 "to do the missionary work among the heathen, especially the Indians and the Negroes." Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 4-6.

with the Negro intellect as he found it on his arrival from Africa and undertake to inculcate doctrines, which only the European mind could comprehend?¹⁵¹

The second issue of debate among the developing denominations was that of slave ownership. The Methodists and the Baptists attracted the largest numbers of Negroes and one of the reasons for this attraction to these denominations was the willingness to be open in attacking slavery. In 1780, the Methodist Church required their traveling preachers to free their slaves,

declaring at the same time that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not that others should do to us and ours. In 1784, the conference took steps for the abolition of slavery, viewing it as “contrary to the golden laws of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets; and the inalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest abasement in a more abject slavery, than is, perhaps, to be found in any part of the world, except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.”¹⁵²

The Baptists were less organized than the Methodists and were not able to exert an equally passionate antislavery organizational sentiment as that of the Methodists. The issue of slave-ownership in the South and separate seating and/or services in the North was an ongoing battle for white abolitionists and Negro leaders.

While maintaining separate and independent churches, Negro leaders persistently assailed the proslavery and caste nature of white religious bodies. Churches which sanctioned racial distinctions, they charged, violated the true spirit of Christianity. How could such institutions propagate the teachings of Jesus Christ and ignore, or even countenance, the ruthless suppression of a human race? . . . Those religious sects which

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵² Ibid., 29.

tolerated such degradation, a Negro convention concluded, were “nothing more than synagogues of Satan.”¹⁵³

Due to complaints and pressures from white slave-owning members, both denominations eventually had to be less forceful about their abolitionist fervor.¹⁵⁴

The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians emerged as the most liberal denominations (in contrast to the Anglicans or the Catholics), accepting Negroes into their congregations and even permitting Negroes to preach.¹⁵⁵ It is not possible to do complete justice in this dissertation to the rich history of the development and rise of the Negro preachers. Each of these men were recipients of the kindness of white clergy, initially traveling with white preachers, sometimes being offered and receiving formal schooling, and eventually establishing their own churches. The first Negro Baptist Church in America was apparently founded in Silver Bluff, South Carolina across the river from Augusta, Georgia, sometime between 1773 and 1775.¹⁵⁶ The church was forced to close when the Union Army evacuated Savannah in 1778.¹⁵⁷ The Negro

¹⁵³ Litwack, *North of Slavery*, 209. In this section Litwack references David Walker’s “Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World,” which is considered to be one of the most important documents written challenging slavery. David Walker, *Walker’s Appeal in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressly, to Those of the United States of America* (Boston, MA: Published by David Walker, 1830).

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 40-70. From these denominations came some of the very first Negro preachers who set the stage and opened up the path for more to follow. This group of pioneers included men such as Uncle Jack, Henry Evans known as Black Henry, John Stewart, Lemuel Haynes, and John Chavis.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁵⁷ Williams, *A People’s History of the Civil War*. Generally known as General Sherman’s March to the Sea. In 1864, General Sherman led the Union Army from Atlanta, Georgia down to Savannah, Georgia. Along the way they destroyed much

preachers in the South struggled to establish and maintain churches primarily due to the oppressive nature of slavery, but also because of the disruptive nature of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

Suffice it to say that the religious conversion activities that began in the South and traveled up into the North sparked a fire among Negroes that was difficult to extinguish long after whites began to lose interest in the development and treatment of Negroes.

After the reaction following the American Revolution when men ceased to think so much of individual or natural rights and thought more frequently of means and measures for centralized government, the Negroes, like most elements far down, were forgotten or ignored even by the church. In this atmosphere of superimposed religious instruction the Negro was called upon merely to heed the Word and live. Experience soon taught, however, that it is difficult for a people to maintain interest in a cause with the management of which they have nothing to do. Having enjoyed for some time the boon of freedom in the church, moreover, the Negroes were loath to give up this liberty.¹⁵⁸

The Negroes in the North had more freedom and support than those in the South. Free Negroes in the North asserted themselves and broke ties with the white-controlled churches which they had been attending and for whom they had been preaching. Thus began what scholars refer to as the Independent Church Movement among Negroes. The A.M.E. Church is considered to be the first example of an Independent Church Movement church. The conditions surrounding the foundation of the A.M.E. Church will be discussed in the following chapter.

property, killed livestock, burned homes and fields. The goal was to economically and psychologically destroy the South and thus the Confederacy. On this March many historically significant structures were destroyed, including the first Negro Baptist Church. The only Negro institution left standing in Atlanta was Big Bethel A.M.E. Church on Auburn Avenue, 311-312.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 71-72.

Negro Education

The history of the various educational processes to which the Negroes of America have seen subjected is interwoven with the history of the United States from the year 1619, when the first slaves landed, to the present moment. With all the mistakes that have been made by the American democracy in its treatment of the Negroes, both as slaves and as free men, the general movement of the Negro people has been decidedly forward. Systematic efforts to build schools for the Negroes were undertaken only after the beginning of the Civil War. The history of the education of the Negro is divided naturally into three periods: (1) education prior to 1861, (2) educational efforts of the Civil War period; and (3) education through public and private funds since the Civil War.¹⁵⁹

The concepts of self-determination and racial uplift as they relate to education were a part of the Negro way of life even before the end of the Civil War. The desire to create their own institutions of education and have control over their own schools was evident before the Freedmen's Bureau went to the South to assist in setting up schools. When Superintendent John W. Alvord conducted a survey as part of the Phelps Stokes Fund study on Negro education, he found that there were at least five hundred native

¹⁵⁹ Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, *Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States, Prepared in Cooperation with the Phelps Stokes Fund under the Direction of Thomas Jesse Jones, Specialist in the Education of Racial Groups* (Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1917). I make honest attempts to provide sources that represent not just the Negro perspective on the issue of Negro education, racial uplift and self-determination. That being stated, this document is being used to provide a non-Negro perspective on the development of education for Negroes from the time of slavery through the post-Civil War era. It is worth reminding the readers that this perspective, like perspectives of the accounts provided by the Negro leaders, while full of relevant factual information also has a bias. The document is written by the United States government, which has a vested interest in presenting a positive light on its role in the development of Negro education. See James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South: 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

schools.¹⁶⁰ Anderson noted that in December 1865, Alvord wrote his first report on the educational findings in the South and he discovered that

Throughout the entire South an effort is being made by the colored people to educate themselves. In the absence of other teaching they are determined to be self-taught; and everywhere some elementary text-book, or the fragment of one, may be seen in the hands of Negroes.¹⁶¹

Alvord's discovery confirmed the desire of Negroes to obtain education with or without the help of Northern benevolent societies or the government.

It stands to reason that before the Negroes could pursue higher education they would need to engage in the basics of reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic. Aside from the native schools mentioned, ex-slaves also sustained Sabbath schools. These were primarily church-sponsored schools, which held meetings in the evenings or on weekends. "Sabbath schools among freedmen have opened throughout the entire South; all of them giving elementary instruction and reaching thousands who cannot attend the week-day teaching."¹⁶² Sabbath schools continued to flourish long after Reconstruction.

¹⁶⁰ James Anderson described the native schools as common schools "founded and maintained exclusively by ex-slaves," Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 6.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 6-7.

¹⁶² Ibid., 12-13. Additionally, Urban and Wagoner noted that the Sunday School movement began in Britain in the 1600s as a way to provide schooling for children from poor and working families, and also as a way to keep the poorer children from becoming what was perceived to be a social problem. In America, Sunday schools were created to "offer literary and moral instruction to working-class children." Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner, *American Education: A History* (McGraw Hill: Boston, MA, 2004, 3rd Edition), 130.

The A.M.E. Church reported having 200,000 students enrolled in its Sabbath schools by 1885, for intellectual and moral instruction.¹⁶³

The early efforts by the ex-slaves in procuring education for themselves and in establishing schools for the Negro community set the stage for the efforts that would take place in the North and in the South after the Civil War. It is not always clear what kind of curriculum was offered at these schools. Some of the institutions that Negroes created were strictly elementary in nature and some were combined elementary and secondary. When the term college was first used to describe Negro institutions, they were not always strictly collegiate in nature (as determined by offering curriculum that was more advanced than that which could be found in elementary and secondary schools). However, this was not too much unlike the beginnings of colleges for whites.¹⁶⁴ The educational institutions established during the antebellum period must be understood within context – they proved to have created a structure and curriculum that suited the socio-economic and political situation of the time and in which they were located. Church and Sedlak describe the antebellum college and academy as being very similar.

. . . . we will discuss colleges and academies together, making little distinction between them, for in essential features and functions the two institutions were fundamentally similar. Both offered post-elementary schooling for young people between the approximate ages of 10 and 40.

¹⁶³ The duality of intellectual and moral training will be explored further in chapter four.

¹⁶⁴ Urban and Jennings noted that under the initial charter William and Mary offered a grammar school curriculum and that college instruction did not begin until 1712, nineteen years after its establishment. Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History*, 30.

. . . Both offered terminal education in that they claimed to provide all the formal schooling that a young person needed for life.¹⁶⁵

Church and Sedlak go on to explain that the antebellum colleges and academies received charters, charged minimal tuition, and were often located in small towns. The curricula was based on the “traditional classical model.”

Equally confusing was the college’s normal practice of establishing its own secondary school within the college to prepare students for college work. Colleges often sprang up in areas in which there were no secondary schools and had to accept students directly out of district school and offer them a secondary course. . . .These college were academies in everything but name, as they offered terminal secondary schooling to the majority of their students.¹⁶⁶

Church and Sedlak conclude the first section of this chapter titled “The Antebellum College and Academy” by writing, “Thus, although we can speak in the abstract of varying levels of higher education, we cannot associate those levels firmly with institutional titles.”¹⁶⁷ This statement sums up the Negro educational experience as Negroes began to create institutions of learning.

The Negro College

Higher education in the United States began in 1636 with the establishment of Harvard College in Massachusetts. Eight other colleges were also founded before the American Revolution.¹⁶⁸ The first black students entered American colleges and

¹⁶⁵ Robert L. Church and Michael W. Sedlak, *Education in the United States: An Interpretive History* (New York: The Free Press, 1976), 23-24.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁶⁸ The College of William and Mary was chartered in 1693; Yale University was founded in 1701 as the Collegiate School; Princeton University was chartered in 1746 as

universities almost two centuries after the founding of Harvard.¹⁶⁹ John Russworm and Edward A. Jones are credited with earning the first degrees awarded to blacks in this nation.¹⁷⁰ From the graduation of Jones and Russworm to the end of the Civil War twenty-eight blacks received baccalaureate degrees.¹⁷¹ A total of five institutions for the education of Negroes were established before the Civil War – the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia in 1837; Avery College in Allegheny, Pennsylvania in 1849; the Ashmun Institue (which became Lincoln University in 1866) in Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1854; Wilberforce University in Ohio in 1855; and an academy for black girls in Washington, D.C. (which became Miner Teacher’s College in 1851).

These institutions of education offered a wide range of courses from primary-school work to college preparatory to teacher training. This fact makes the debate of how to classify these institutions difficult – are they academies, normal schools, or colleges? It is not an issue that seemed to bother or concern the founders of the first Negro colleges. The problematic classification is really more of an issue for a researcher. The Negro founders had ambitions of creating educated ministers, teachers, and leaders for the

the College of New Jersey; the University of Pennsylvania opened in 1751; Columbia University was founded in 1754 as King’s College; Brown University was founded in 1764; Rutgers was chartered in 1766 as Queen’s College; and Dartmouth College was founded in 1769. It is interesting to note that each of these colleges endured several transitions in organization and curriculum before they evolved into their current states.

¹⁶⁹ Oberlin College opened its doors in 1833 and did not discriminate based on race or sex in its admissions process. Oberlin accepted any women or Negroes who applied. Church and Sedlak, *Education in the United States*, 25.

¹⁷⁰ Edward Jones graduated from Amherst College (1826) in Massachusetts and then became a priest in Sierra Leone where he established the first college in the region. John Russworm graduated from Bowdoin College in Maine (1826) and served as governor of Liberia from 1836 to 1851. Drewry and Doerman. *Stand and Prosper*, 32.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

Negro community. If the title of their institutions were loftier than the curriculum being offered inside, it was of no immediate consequence to them. The primary goal was to provide a service that had not been previously available and to begin to lay the foundation for an informed and aware Negro citizenry. The ultimate goal was to be classified and offer postsecondary education and award baccalaureate degrees. Despite what the Negro institutions chose to call themselves, there is not a record of any of the black institutions awarding baccalaureate degrees before the end of the Civil War.¹⁷²

Many historians who write about Negro education give credit to the American Missionary Society and regional and state Freedmen's Aid societies for the establishment of elementary and secondary education in the South, which eventually led to the establishment of colleges and universities. This dissertation focuses primarily on the efforts of the A.M.E. Church, a historically Negro denomination, in establishing colleges. Because the story of the Negro college often focuses on the efforts in the South, the story of the A.M.E. Church and its colleges is often relegated to a one or two paragraph description in an article about the evolution of the Negro college; or the story of the A.M.E. Church's efforts is told in conjunction with that of the predominantly white Methodist denomination. The story has, however, important and unique nuances. The A.M.E. Church began its educational efforts in the North around the same time in which the Freedmen's Bureau was established to assist the refugees and freed slaves of the South. The A.M.E. Church was obviously able to gain more support and momentum due

¹⁷² Several scholars of historically black colleges and universities have noted that the designation of college or university after the name of an institution was based upon their faith, hope, and aspirations for what these institutions would become rather than what they actually were at the time of their establishment. For an early discussion, see D.O.W. Holmes, *The Evolution of the Negro College* (New York: Teachers College, 1942).

to the efforts initiated and widely carried out by the Freedmen's Bureau. It is important to acknowledge from whence the A.M.E. Church (and other organizations) received its inspiration for establishing collegiate institutions.

Dwight Oliver Wendell (D.O.W. as he is noted in the majority of his writings) Holmes identified four periods of development for the Negro college.¹⁷³ The first period began in 1860 and extended until 1885. During this period of time the Freedmen's Bureau, the Negro church, and Northern benevolent societies were busy assisting freed slaves and refugees establish their new lives and create the beginnings of educational opportunities. The second period of Negro college development began in 1886 and went on for three decades. Negro colleges began to follow the curricular pattern of the predominantly white colleges, and Negro ministers and teachers began to be trained in record number. The third period of development began in 1917 and continued through 1928. 1917 marks the year in which the Phelps-Stokes Fund survey on Negro education was completed and published.¹⁷⁴ The final and fourth period of Negro college

¹⁷³ D.O.W. Holmes, "The Beginnings of the Negro College," *The Journal of Negro Education* 3 (April 1934): 168-193. Holmes received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Morehouse College and a graduate degree in Education from Columbia University in 1934. He served as the dean of Howard University's Graduate School. He wrote extensively on the Negro College, including a book titled *Evolution of the Negro College*.

¹⁷⁴ Anson Phelps-Stokes was a Northern philanthropist who strongly supported Hampton and Tuskegee. He sat on the Tuskegee Board of Trustees and during the Hampton-Tuskegee endowment campaign he was appointed the chairman of the special gifts committee. Phelps-Stokes pledged \$25,000 to the campaign. Thomas Jesse Jones in 1917 was the director of research for the Phelps-Stoke Fund. From 1914 to 1916 he conducted a survey of black higher education for the Federal Bureau of Education, which resulted in a two-volume book entitled *Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States, Prepared in Cooperation with the Phelps Stokes Fund under the Direction of Thomas Jesse Jones, Specialist in the Education of Racial Groups* (Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1917). Jones' report questioned the legitimacy and was critical of black institutions of higher education; he identified Howard University and Fisk University as being the only two

development began in 1928 and included the time in which Holmes wrote his article (1934).¹⁷⁵ Going beyond Holmes' article, other scholars have defined that last stage in the history of Negro education as going up until the 1960s or 1970s when more significant changes began to take place not only in education but also across the nation, which adversely affected Negroes in colleges and the Negro colleges.¹⁷⁶

The Freedmen's Bureau (officially the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands – a War Department agency) was not initially concerned with the educational needs of the Negro. This federal agency was formed to provide for the material needs of the freedmen (housing, clothing, employment, transportation) and to provide for their “mental and spiritual improvement.”¹⁷⁷ At the insistence of General Oliver O. Howard (and over the veto objection of President Andrew Johnson) in July of 1866, the work of the Freedmen's Bureau was extended for two years and that extension of time included the establishment of educational institutions. Despite intimidation efforts by the Ku Klux Klan, the superintendent of education for the bureau, J.W. Alvord,

institutions capable of offering college-level work. He recommended that all of the other black colleges and universities be converted to secondary, elementary, and normal schools. Some scholars (see James Anderson) felt his report and criticism was unjustly harsh and biased by the Northern industrial philanthropic foundations' bias towards the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. This report and view marked a critical point for black colleges' survival, their struggle to gain accreditation, and to obtain financial support.

¹⁷⁵ Holmes wrote a book and an article with the same title (*Evolution of the Negro College*). The article was published in 1934 in the *Journal of Negro Education*, and the book in 1942, by Teachers College.

¹⁷⁶ Roebuck and Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, 21-51.

¹⁷⁷ Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 212-218.

noted that Negro children attended schools in large numbers sometimes at rates equal to or greater than white children.

In the District of Columbia, 75 percent of the Negro children attended school as against only 41 percent of white children; that in Memphis, Tennessee, 72 percent of the Negro children attended school; in Alabama 79 percent, and in Virginia 82 percent.¹⁷⁸

These numbers brought to light the issue of the lack of teachers to meet the growing demand for education. “The solution of course, could be found only in the provision in higher schools where the colored people could be trained so as to supply their own schools with competent instructors.”¹⁷⁹ Holding to their need for self-determination, many areas in the South expressed a preference for Negro teachers.¹⁸⁰ Alvord thus advocated for the improvement and enlargement of the normal schools and suggested that the colleges, which the Bureau had established, should be endowed in order to ensure their permanency.

¹⁷⁸ Phelps-Stoke Fund, *Negro Education: A Study*, 177.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 177-178.

¹⁸⁰ There were many young Negro teachers whose families traveled from the South to enroll them in Northern colleges so that they could be prepared to teach in the Southern Negro schools. Butchart tells the story of at least seven of these young women who were educated at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary and Oberlin before traveling to the South to teach. Butchart’s article tells the story of both Negro and white women. Butchart writes that “We now know where roughly one-fifth of the freedmen’s teachers received their terminal education, including academies, female seminaries, colleges, and theological schools. They attended 125 different schools. Here is the remarkable fact: nearly one-quarter of the teachers who attended those institutions attended either Oberlin or Mount Holyoke. Between 1861 and 1875, 290 of the freedmen’s teachers had studied for one or more years at Oberlin, 86 in its preparatory department, 204 in one of its collegiate-level programs. Eighty-eight had studied at Mount Holyoke. For both schools, freedmen’s teachers accounted for a bit less than 3 percent of all students who had graduated from those institutions from their founding in the 1830s to 1860.” Ronald Butchart, “Mission Matters: Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, and the Schooling of Southern Blacks, 1861-1917,” *History of Education Quarterly* 42 (Spring 2002): 2-7.

By January 1868, the Bureau had established the following schools for training teachers and institutions of higher learning: National Theological Institute, Washington, D.C.; Howard University, Washington, D.C.; Saint Martin's School, Washington, D.C.; Normal School, Richmond, Virginia; Berea College, Berea, Kentucky; St. Augustine's Normal School, Raleigh, North Carolina; Wesleyan College in East Tennessee; Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee; Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia; Robert College, Lookout Mountain, Tennessee; Alabama High and Normal Schools. By 1870, the Bureau was wrapping up its educational work in the South. The work begun by the Bureau was now left up to the states and churches.

The debate about Negro colleges, in particular private colleges, begins with the fact that many of them did not immediately offer a college-level curriculum.¹⁸¹ If we look closely at the histories of historically white institutions, including the Ivy League colleges and universities, we will find that the same issue occurred at these institutions. For example, scholars believe that Avery College in Allegheny, which was established in 1849, was probably a trade school. Lincoln University in Pennsylvania was originally

¹⁸¹ The issue of the type of curriculum offered at the early Negro colleges has been discussed earlier in this chapter. This is one of the facts that Jones took issue with in his 1917 survey and report. One of the facts however, that Jones did not seem to take into consideration is that institutions of education were attempting to meet the needs of a variety of knowledge and skill levels. There were hundreds of thousands of Negroes who had never had the opportunity to learn to read, write, or count. Therefore, some Negro educational institutions that called themselves colleges or academies provided a range of educational opportunities that may have included basic reading, writing, and arithmetic up to advanced math, learning of Latin, and so forth. See Sedlak and Church, *Education in the United States*; and Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*.

incorporated in 1854 as Ashmun Institute and Wilberforce University did not begin its college work in earnest until after the Civil War.¹⁸²

As was mentioned above, the Freedmen's Bureau contributed to the establishment of several colleges, which while accepting government support were still considered private. Many of the nation's oldest colleges were private and had a religious foundation such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Columbia.¹⁸³ In addition to the Freedmen's Bureau, a lot of credit must be given to the Congregationalists, the Methodists, and the Baptists for establishing the nation's first private colleges for Negroes. Each denomination saw a need to take care of the educational needs of its Negro constituency.¹⁸⁴ The predominantly white denominations established their own Freedmen's Aid societies through which they created colleges for Negroes.

¹⁸² Rayford W. Logan, "The Evolution of Private Colleges for Negroes," *The Journal of Negro Education* 27 (Summer 1958): 215.

¹⁸³ The importance of religion to the early colleges and specifically the A.M.E. colleges will be discussed in chapter four. For a detailed look at the connection between religion, colleges, and curriculum see Laurence R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1965).

¹⁸⁴ In *The Journal of Negro Education* 29 (Summer 1960): 211-407, each of the denominations contributed an article stating its reasons for establishing Negro colleges. The primary shared goals of these denominations were: Christian duty, elevation of the Negro race, and for moral and mental improvement. The articles in this issue are: "The Rationale Underlying Support of Negro Private Colleges by the Methodist Church," by James S. Thomas; "The Policies and Rationale Governing Support of Negro Private Colleges Maintained by the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.," by E. Fay Campbell; "The Policies and Rationale Underlying the Support of Negro Colleges and Schools Maintained by the Presbyterian Church in the United States," by L.W. Bottoms; "The Protestant Episcopal Church: Policies and Rationale Upon Which Support of its Negro Colleges is Predicated," by Tollie L. Caution; "Why the Seventh Day Adventist Church Established and Maintains a Negro College and Schools for Negroes below College Grade," by F.L. Peterson; "Congregationalists and Negro Education," by Wesley A. Hotchkiss; "Why the Evangelical Lutheran Church Established and Maintains a College for Negroes," by Wm. H. Kampschmidt; "The Roman Catholic Church: The Rationale and Policies Underlying the Maintenance of Higher Institutions for Negroes,"

By 1867, the Freedmen Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church had established six colleges and normal schools, two Biblical institutes, and sixty elementary schools. Their institutions of higher education included: Central Tennessee College in Nashville, Tennessee; Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia; Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina; New Orleans University in New Orleans, Louisiana; Shaw University in Holly Springs, Mississippi; Bennett Seminary in Greensboro, North Carolina; Cookman Institute in Jacksonville, Florida; Haven Normal School in Waynesboro, Georgia; and LaGrange Seminary in LaGrange, Georgia. As is typical with many institutions established during that period of time, many of these colleges have ceased to exist, have merged, or have changed names and purpose.¹⁸⁵

The American Baptist Home Missionary Society was the organization through which the Northern Baptists provided aid and educational support to Negroes. By 1870,

by William Dunne; “The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church: The Rationale and Policies Upon which Support of its Colleges is Predicated,” by C.D. Coleman; “The Rationale Underlying Support of Colleges Maintained by the African Methodist Episcopal Church,” by Sherman L. Greene; “The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: The Rationale and Policies upon which Maintenance of its Colleges is Based,” by James W. Eichelberger; and “Policies and Rationale Underlying the Support of Colleges Maintained by the Baptist Denomination,” by John M. Ellison.

¹⁸⁵ Central Tennessee College was originally founded in 1865 by missionaries from the Methodist Church and later became Walden University before being discontinued in 1925. Leland College in New Orleans, established in 1870, eventually merged with Dillard University (founded in 1869 and affiliated with the United Church of Christ). Shaw University’s name was changed to Rust College (founded in 1866 by Northern missionaries from the Methodist Episcopal Church) so that it would not be confused with Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. Bennett Seminary, founded in 1873 and offering both high school and college-level courses, became the all-female institution Bennett College. Cookman Institute was originally founded by Mary McLeod Bethune as the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in 1904. The school underwent several curricular and name changes, eventually merging into what is now known as Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. Roebuck and Komanduri, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).

the Baptists operated the following schools: Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C.; a school in Nashville, Tennessee which was later Roger Williams University; another school in Raleigh, North Carolina which became Shaw University; and Leland College in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Presbyterian Church founded Biddle University in Charlotte, North Carolina (now Johnson C. Smith University), the Protestant Episcopal Church created the St. Augustine's School in 1867, and after the beginning of the twentieth century, the Roman Catholic Church created Xavier University.¹⁸⁶

The Negro denominations also established their own colleges. The fact that the Negro denominations established their own colleges is part of the racial uplift and self-determination philosophy. Many Negro leaders advocated for education as one of the best, if not the best form of racial uplift and along with that philosophy was the belief that whenever possible Negroes should work to uplift themselves – build their own churches and institutions of education. One example that supports racial uplift through education and supports uplift done by Negroes themselves comes from a contributor to the *Colored American*, identified by his initials of A.G.B., from New Haven, Connecticut.

In considering the improvement which we need, I shall confine myself to those which are strictly mental and may easily be acquired, and when acquired do not necessarily influence the heart or moral character of the individual. The list of those branches which are important, is not as full as I might easily make it, and includes by no means all that I deem necessary or useful, but only a few plain, practical branches, which may be gained by almost any one who has the courage to TRY, and the patience to PERSEVERE. Some of the studios, then, which claim our attention are Reading, Arithmetic, Grammar, History, Domestic Economy, Composition, the Mechanic Arts, and our Civil Rights. The work of moral improvement is a great work. It is a practical work; much of it is work

¹⁸⁶ Logan, "The Evolution of Private Colleges for Negroes," 213-220.

which we must do for ourselves – it cannot be done for us – it must be done in us.¹⁸⁷

Based on this philosophy as discussed in chapter one, Negro churches began to create institutions of learning for their people. I will only momentarily focus on those institutions formed by Negro denominations other than the A.M.E. Church. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church was established in 1796. The AMEZ continues to support one college, Livingston in Salisbury, North Carolina, founded in 1879 as Zion Wesley Institute. Not unlike the other denominational colleges, Livingston served several educational purposes, functioning as a theological seminary as well as a high school until it was organized into a four-year college. The Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church established the following four colleges: Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee, 1878; Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, 1882; Texas College in Tyler, Texas, 1894; and Miles Memorial College in Birmingham, Alabama in 1902.¹⁸⁸

Two things in particular are significant about the colleges established by the Negro denominations. They were as ambitious as the predominantly white institutions and determined to operate under self-determination. They may not have always provided

¹⁸⁷ In the previous chapter I use many other examples of this rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination as written by various individuals in the Negro newspapers. This quote comes from two separate articles published in *The Colored American* by a person identified as A.G.B. He wrote a series of sixteen articles titled “Thoughts,” numbered one through sixteen. In the series A.G.B. proposes to “notice some of the means which we possess to gain mental and moral improvement.” The articles primarily point out the state of the Negro at that time, what the Negro does to harm himself and block progress towards uplift, and what the Negro should do to improve himself and the plight of other Negroes. A.G.B. [full and real name unknown], “Thoughts,” *The Colored American*, July 4, 1840 and March 6, 1841.

¹⁸⁸ This information comes from the various articles published in a special edition of *The Journal of Negro Education*, titled The Negro Private and Church-Related College 29 (1960): 211-407.

a strictly collegiate level education, but they were providing the type of schooling that was needed for the Negro population at any given time.¹⁸⁹ Holmes makes this point about the Negro colleges, not as an excuse for their organization or curriculum or facilities, but as a way to acknowledge that their establishment is accomplishment in and of itself:

The Negro college must be judged by the distance it has come rather than by its absolute achievements; for it must constantly be born in mind, in considering any phase of this subject that, at the beginning of the Civil War, the Negro race, generally considered, began its academic education at zero. ... The zero mark referred to, however, must not be taken too literally; for, from the institution of slavery in America in 1619 to the beginning of the nineteenth century, a considerable number of persons of color received academic instruction in varying degrees, ranging from the rudiments of reading and writing to skill in the use of such subjects as foreign languages and mathematics.¹⁹⁰

The Negro denominations displayed self-reliance in their efforts to elevate themselves out of poverty and illiteracy.

Initially I thought that the second most significant aspect of the Negro private and church-related college is that it never excluded or discriminated. While these institutions stood separately they were not “segregating institutions.”¹⁹¹ With the exception of the Negro colleges which were established for the purposes of educating men (Morehouse

¹⁸⁹ The issue of curriculum is one that comes up time and again as Negroes and whites survey, review, and report on the Negro colleges. It is an issue I have noted makes this research challenging in attempting to be true to what the Negro institutions offered and not judge those institutions against the standards set by white institutions. This is especially important in the early days of the Negro institutions because they were not reviewed and judged to meet the standards of any accrediting agency. Therefore, the curriculum offered was subject only to the judgment and approval of those who established the college, the faculty, and perhaps the students.

¹⁹⁰ Holmes, “The Beginnings of the Negro College,” 170.

¹⁹¹ Benjamin E. Mays, “The Significance of the Negro Private and Church-related College,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 29 (Summer 1960): 246.

College) or women (Spelman College and Bennett College), the doors of Negro colleges were open to men and women of all races and faiths. Within the A.M.E. Church colleges there existed no policy that excluded people of any other ethnic or racial group.

However, Philo Hutcheson believes that there may have been some Negro colleges whose charters may have had exclusive language, but in my research I did not come across any A.M.E. colleges that had language that excluded based upon race. I did find stories that showed that there was racial exclusion within some HBCUs. In Wayne Urban's *Black Scholar* there are two periods in Horace Mann Bond's life that hint at the segregation that may have taken place within some of the HBCUs. One story is about Bond's time as a student at Lincoln University and the fact that there were no Negro faculty.

Indeed Lincoln University was a relatively conservative institution devoted to the overtly nonconservative purpose of educating blacks. Located in the southeastern corner of PA, about ten miles north of the Mason-Dixon line, Lincoln looked south to find many of its students...In conformity with its large number of southern students and its rural PA setting, Lincoln was a nonreformist institution that sought to minimize militant attitudes and maintain a low profile in the region. Firmly controlled by white ministers who dominated its faculty and board of trustees, Lincoln University was one of the last of the black colleges to hire black faculty; it did not hire a black professor until the 1930s, and it did not hire a black president until 1945.¹⁹²

Further, when Bond went to Fort Valley State to take over as president, it was clear that the state of Georgia was operating one university system with separate colleges for whites and Blacks. Urban describes Fort Valley as the "third black unit in the university system."¹⁹³

¹⁹² Wayne Urban, *Black Scholar: Horace Mann Bond, 1904-1972* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 14.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 95.

Despite the fact that Urban points out some instances of segregation within HBCUs, I continue to contend that the Negro private and church-related college created a unique environment for integration. The A.M.E. colleges may have been one of the few, if not only places in which people of different backgrounds could meet together in relative freedom. One example of this comes from Talladega College:

The College viewed itself as an interracial community isolated from a surrounding world that was strongly opposed to any mixing of the races. Within such an environment, the presence of interracial elementary and secondary schools, which the children of black and white faculty and staff attend on a basis of equality, was seen as important and viewed with pride.¹⁹⁴

One of the reasons this was true has to do with the fact that private and church-related colleges were by and large free of political control.¹⁹⁵ True, each denomination has its own set of internal politics that must be abided by. However, the historically black private and church-related colleges were mostly free from governmental (state and federal) political control.

Both the Negro Church and the Negro College served as institutions of social cohesion, racial uplift, and self-sufficiency for Negroes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁹⁶ The contributions that both of these institutions made to the lives of

¹⁹⁴ Drewry and Doermann, *Stand and Prosper*, xix and 148-149.

¹⁹⁵ Berea College was the first college located in a slave state to freely admit Negroes, but its interracial educational pursuits ended in 1904, when the Kentucky state legislature passed a law forbidding the mingling of the races in the same department of any institution of learning. Berea took its case to the United States Supreme Court, which upheld the Kentucky state law. Drewry and Doermann, *Stand and Prosper*, 21.

¹⁹⁶ As was explained in chapter one, one of the adverse effects of slavery was the loss of family, social ties, language, religious practices, and autonomy and freedom. The creation of organizations and institutions which could bring Negroes together and allow them to engage in cultural expression and various methods of moral, social, economic, and intellectual improvement contributed much to the improvement of the lives of

individuals, to the Negro community, and to the larger national and international community cannot be overlooked. The Negro Church and the Negro College are the foundation of all other Negro institutions in the United States. Frazier wrote that “the most important institution which the Negro has built in the United States is the Negro church.”¹⁹⁷ From the Negro Church came other institutions such as fraternal organizations, socio-political organizations, and Negro institutions of education.

America’s private black colleges have undergone profound changes in their century-and-a-half long history, as has the society in which they exist. Yet they continue to be, as they always have been, sanctuaries for young black Americas. From their beginnings, they were places of relative safety that allowed space for the discovery and strengthening of self, provided time and encouragement for intellectual journeys often discouraged elsewhere, and inculcated pride and interest in the preservation of the black experience.¹⁹⁸

Despite the problems that both the Negro Church and the Negro schools would face in the decades to come and due in large part to their most ardent supporters, both institutions created legacies that have endured the tests of time. In 1870 there were ninety-five advanced schools and colleges for Negroes and by 1915 there were 2,637 students enrolled in Negro schools offering college-level courses.¹⁹⁹ At the same time membership in Negro churches grew to over two million in just the Methodist

Negroes. This statement is a simplification of the journey on which Negroes embarked to create and maintain institutions of their own through racial uplift and self-determination detailed in chapter one. Litwack, *North of Slavery* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1961); Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* with C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Church since Frazier* (Schocken Books: New York, 1974).

¹⁹⁷ E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie: The Rise of a New Middle Class in the United States* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 77.

¹⁹⁸ Drewry and Doermann, *Stand and Prosper*, xix.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 47 and 52.

denominations alone.²⁰⁰ As the next chapters will show, each of these important institutions had devoted leadership that helped to sustain and propel them to the solid institutions they have been considered to be.

²⁰⁰ Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, 78.

CHAPTER FOUR
RICHARD ALLEN AND THE BEGINNING OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

God our Father,
Christ our redeemer,
Man our brother²⁰¹

Introduction

Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner wrote that it “is dangerous to let one man stand for an institution, even if he was its most famous advocate. However, studying an institution through its most notable proponent can allow one to see concretely and vividly how that institution touched peoples’ lives.”²⁰² It is with these words in mind that I spend the next two chapters presenting and discussing the lives and contributions of two important men in the African Methodist Episcopal Church – Richard Allen, the Church’s founder and first Bishop, and Daniel Payne, the sixth Bishop of the A.M.E. Church and the first advocate of the Church pursuing education.

Richard Allen and his contributions are important because it is through him that the African Methodist Episcopal Church maintained its Methodist roots and philosophy and through Allen that the church remained committed to promoting Christian values in every venture it undertook, including education. Daniel Payne is important because he

²⁰¹ This is the adopted motto of the A.M.E. Church, which was created by Daniel A. Payne. The motto has also been put to music and is sung from time to time during worship services.

²⁰² Urban and Wagoner, *American Education: A History*, 97.

was the first leader in the A.M.E. church to vocalize and take steps towards having the church involved in creating institutions of education. There are many other important men within the church who will be mentioned throughout the next two chapters, but these two stand out as the most significant and also they were two of the few who were educated and could write and wrote their lives stories down for posterity.

The Structure and Governance of the A.M.E. Church²⁰³

The A.M.E. Church describes itself as a connectional organization, which means each local church is part of the larger connection. The Bishops are the chief officers of this connection, and thus each local church ultimately answers to a bishop or the Council of Bishops. Bishops are elected for life by a majority vote at the General Conference, which meets every four years. Bishops are bound by church law to retire following their 75th birthday. The Council of Bishops meets annually and must hold two public sessions at each annual meeting; at the first public meeting “complaints and petitions against a Bishop shall be heard, at the second, the decisions of the Council shall be made public.

²⁰³ Information in this section was obtained from telephone conversations with Bishop James L. Davis, who was the senior pastor of Big Bethel A.M.E. Church in Atlanta, Georgia and now serves as Bishop of the 19th Episcopal District and from the A.M.E. website <http://www.ame-church.com> (accessed on June 1, 2006). The Church does not have an actual headquarters. The publishing house and a good number of historical records are located in Nashville, Tennessee. Information about the General Conference proceedings can be obtained from the Nashville office although on two visits in the summer of 2000 it became clear that there was not a complete account of all General Conferences. Some local churches have copies of the local conferences and some general conference proceedings. Many libraries (Wilberforce University, Harvard University, Boston University, Auburn Research) have enough proceedings that by visiting each location a researcher could put together a semi-comprehensive history of conference proceedings. The telephone conversation with Bishop Davis took place in June of 2006.

All decisions shall be in writing.”²⁰⁴ Presiding Elders are the next in line in the chain of command and they assist the Bishops. Presiding Elders are appointed by a Bishop to supervise the preachers in a given district.

The first A.M.E. Church ever established in the United States is located in Philadelphia. Following the establishment of what is known as Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church other churches were founded in Maryland, Baltimore, and New York. At that time the A.M.E. Church did not have distinct districts and there was only one bishop – Richard Allen. As Allen began to age and fail in health, another bishop was elected to assist him – Morris Brown. It was not until 1853 that the Church had more than one presiding bishop and more than one regional district. The early structure and governance of the church was almost non-existent as there were not that many churches. The current structure and governance of the Church is important to note because it illustrates the hierarchical structure and process of the Church – an important element to keep in mind when reading about the debates regarding education in chapter four.

The Church currently has twenty Episcopal districts across the United States, in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean.

A Presiding Elder District is one portion of an Annual Conference, which in turn is one part of the Episcopal District over which a Bishop presides. In the Presiding Elder District, the appointed Presiding Elder meets with the local churches that comprise the District, at least once every three months for a Quarterly Conference. The Presiding Elder also presides over a District Conference and a Sunday School Convention in his or her District. At the end of an Annual Conference year, the Presiding Elder

²⁰⁴ The A.M.E. Church website <http://www.ame-church.com> (accessed on June 1, 2006).

reports to the Bishop at the Annual Conference and makes recommendations for pastoral appointments.²⁰⁵

Presiding Elders make recommendations to the Bishops regarding assignment of preachers to a church, also known as a charge.

Preachers in the early Church years and now receive yearly appointments, but most receive a charge at which they stay for their entire career (the strongly encouraged retirement age for A.M.E. pastors is sixty-five, although some have stayed in their positions well into their seventies). Figure 1 provides an illustration of the governance structure of the A.M.E. Church.

²⁰⁵ Ibid. The districts within the United States are quite large and have an average of over fifty churches, and often one state comprises a district (this is the case with Georgia, it is District 6). Two states can comprise a district (A.M.E. churches in Arkansas and Oklahoma are District 12 and churches in Kentucky and Tennessee are District 13). Sometimes several states make up a district (District 1 is a combination of A.M.E. churches in upstate New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, parts of New Jersey and parts of Pennsylvania). One state could also have churches that are part of more than one district, meaning that the state's A.M.E. Churches belong to different districts (A.M.E. Churches in Pennsylvania fall into two districts – District 1 and 3). The largest international district is in South Africa, District 18 with over fifty churches, one seminary, and one community college. At the time this dissertation was being written, the Church was discussing the issue of redistricting. An unspoken fact is that districts are an important issue because larger districts tend to have more members, which translates to more money, especially the districts that have educated congregations with professional jobs. Each one of the A.M.E. colleges in the United States resides in a different district and while the Connection provides some support for each college, the majority of the financial burden lays with the district and more specifically, with the local church affiliated with that college. For example, Morris Brown College is in Atlanta, Georgia which is District 6, therefore District 6 bears the majority of the financial responsibility for that college (there is an actual Morris Brown day in which the churches attempt to collect money to support the college but in theory individuals would give to the support the college with the same frequency as they contribute to the offering – weekly or monthly); but since the pastor of Big Bethel A.M.E. in Atlanta is president of the Morris Brown Board of Trustees, that church bears an even greater financial responsibility for the college. When the colleges were first founded the fact of districts and financial responsibility was not an issue because the entire Connection provided for each of the colleges (this will be shown in a subsequent chapter), but with the growth of the Church each district took on the responsibility of supporting the college located within its region.

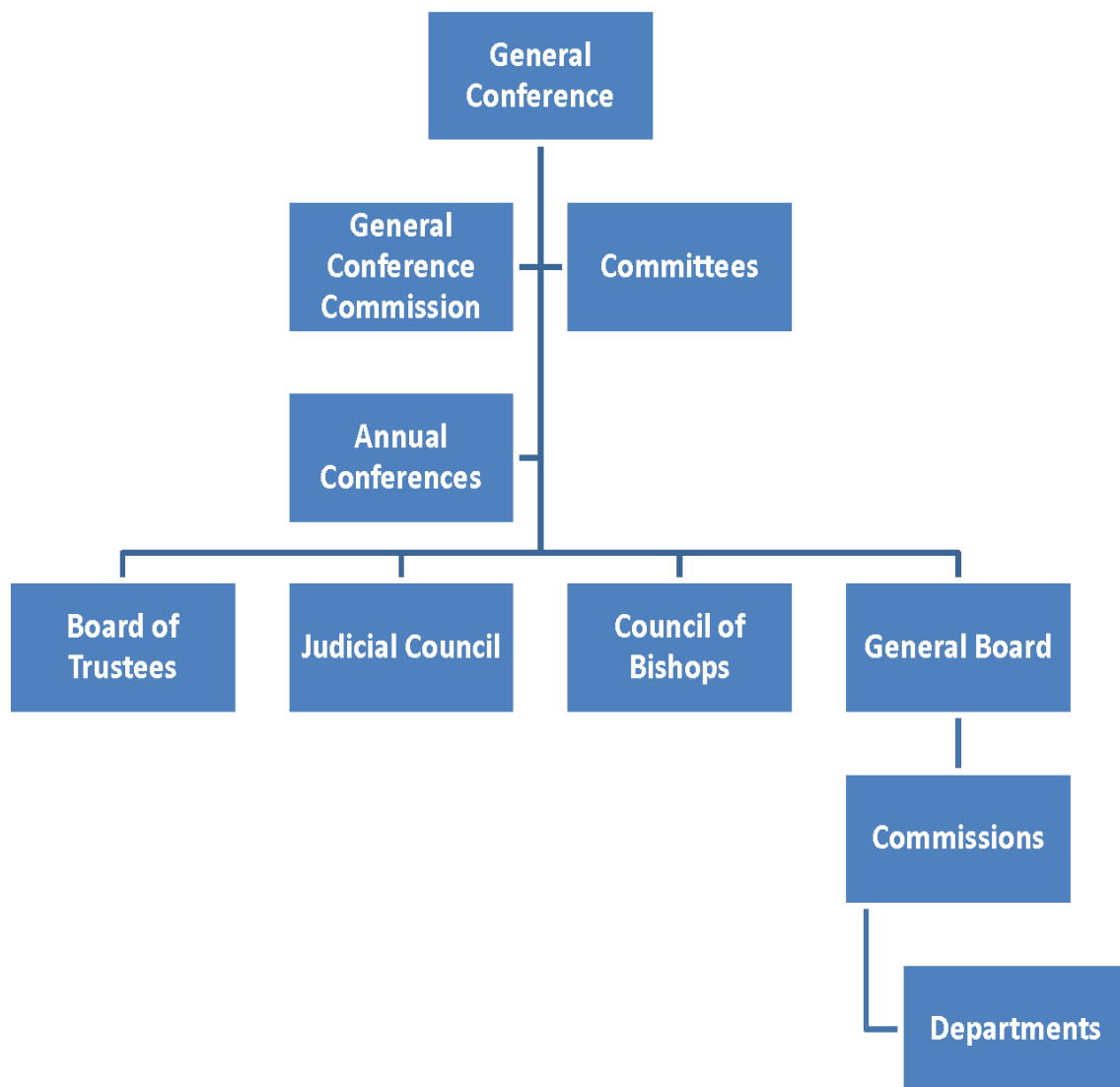


Figure 1. AME Church Organizational Chart.²⁰⁶

The General Conference is the supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is composed of the Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences. Other ex-officio members

²⁰⁶ The A.M.E. Church website <http://www.ame-church.com> (accessed June 1, 2006).

are: the General Officers, College Presidents, Deans of Theological Seminaries; Chaplains in the Regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A.²⁰⁷

The Board of Trustees, also known as the Board of Incorporators, is entrusted with the supervision of all connectional property. The General Board is the administrative body of the church, and includes the General Secretary, the General Treasurer, members of various boards, and one Bishop who serves as the presiding officer.²⁰⁸ Again, it is important to note that this structure did not exist when Daniel Payne made the decision to purchase Wilberforce University on behalf of the A.M.E. Church (see chapter four). Finally, “The Judicial Council is the highest judicatory body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is an appellate court, elected by the General Conference and is amenable to it.”²⁰⁹

What is obviously missing from the organizational diagram are the local churches and their ministers, who are an important blood-line of the continuation of the A.M.E. Connection. Beyond the diagram it would be hard for a non-member of the Church to

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ The General Secretary has an office in Nashville, Tennessee where several other officers have an office at which they do not necessarily spend the majority of their time (I made this discovery when I visited the church historian). Most of the Church officers have usually served as a minister of a local church. Other general officers (some of whom hold two titles) of the church include: (a) the church historian, who also currently serves as the Executive Director of Research and Scholarship; (b) the treasurer who is chief financial officer of the Finance Department; (c) three Secretary-Treasurers, one of the Christian Education Department, one of the Sunday School Union, and one of the Department of Missions (these departments all fall under the “departments” section of the governance structure of the church); (d) an Executive Director for the Department of Annuity Investments and Insurance; (e) a Director of Church Growth and Development; and (f) the Editor of the *Christian Recorder*. The visit to the A.M.E. offices in Nashville, TN took place in the summer of 2003.

²⁰⁹ The A.M.E. Church website <http://www.ame-church.com> (accessed June 1, 2006).

figure out or learn how the Church is structured and how it functions. It truly takes an inside view to know and understand the structure. That being said the A.M.E. Church (from a former member perspective) runs a well organized institution.

Richard Allen and the Beginning of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead; and buried. The third day he arose from the dead' he ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.²¹⁰

Like many historically black organizations and institutions, the A.M.E. Church grew out of a desire to provide for Negroes a social, spiritual, and intellectual outlet that had been denied them for many decades. Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, William Gray, William Wilcher, and many other poor and illiterate Africans were faithful worshipers at St. George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.²¹¹ One morning in the year

²¹⁰ The Apostle's Creed forms the foundation for the A.M.E. Church's belief system. It is typically recited at communion. The Apostle's Creed is representative of Richard Allen and his personal beliefs and how he thought individuals within the Church should think as they went about the business of the Church – God and God's work first and business second, <http://www.ame-church.com/about-us/beliefs> (accessed June 1, 2006).

²¹¹ Methodism in America was created by John Wesley who was a missionary with the Church of England. In 1769, Wesley sent two lay preachers to work in the American colonies. Two years later Wesley sent Richard Wright and Francis Asbury to America as well. Asbury would be instrumental in ordaining and supporting Richard Allen. In December of 1787 at a Christian conference the men who had been organized under Wesley pledged their allegiance to his doctrines and organized the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. There were two other separate Methodist denominations that operated in America up until 1939 when the Methodist Protestant Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Episcopal Church joined to create the United Methodist Church. Information obtained from the United Methodist Church

1787, they had mistakenly knelt down to pray in the wrong section of the gallery and while on their knees in prayer, those African worshipers were physically and forcibly removed from St. George by a group of trustees.²¹² Led by Allen and Jones, due to this inhumane and unjust treatment, the Philadelphia-area Africans withdrew in protest from St. George. They set out to establish their own church where they could worship without restrictions, without fear and intimidation, and without the interference of racial discrimination or oppression.²¹³

Under the leadership of Richard Allen, an old blacksmith shop was purchased and moved to a lot on the corner of Sixth and Lombard streets in Philadelphia. On that corner was organized the first A.M.E. Church in the United States, and it has been known as Mother Bethel ever since.²¹⁴ That event was just the beginning of the A.M.E. Church's

archives website at <http://www.gcah.org.htm> (accessed June 2006). Also see Frederick A. Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1974).

²¹² Typically if a white church allowed Africans in to worship, they had to do so in some area specifically designated by the whites, which was usually in the basement or up in the balcony; if that space was needed for white members then the Africans had to move. Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 29-30.

²¹³ Charles H. Wesley, *Richard Allen: Apostle of Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1935), 52-53. Richard Allen and Absalom Jones formed the Free African Society. Initially FAS was a self-help/mutual aid organization that assisted the sick and shut-in and widows with burial costs. When it came to theological philosophy, Allen and Jones could not, however, agree on whether the church should be modeled after the Protestant Episcopal or the Methodist Episcopal Church. Jones went on to form the African Protestant Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. Allen, who had been influenced since a young boy by the Methodists, went on to create the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The exact order of events concerning the departure from St. George's, the forming of the Free African Society, and the creation of Bethel A.M.E. Church have been recorded with slight differences over time. The information for this dissertation comes directly as recorded in Allen's autobiography *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Philadelphia: Martin and Boden Printers, 1833).

²¹⁴ The blacksmith shop was purchased from a man named Sims and the lot purchased from a man named Mark Wilcox. The church was named and dedicated by

involvement in acts that denoted its commitment to not only improving the status of the African individual, but also to enduring the recognition of the Negro as a human being who was entitled to a sense of respect and dignity. The Church sought to enhance the spiritual, moral, social, economic, and intellectual lives of its people.

There are a few ironies in the founding of the A.M.E. Church and its symbolic stance as a beacon of racial uplift and self-determination. The ironies reflect the social laws and conditions of the time and inherently speak to the necessity of individuals who were willing to take personal risks and expose individual imperfections in order to create better opportunities for the greater Negro community. Nine men applied for the “Articles of Association for Bethel A.M.E. Church” on August 23, 1796. Of those nine men, three could not sign their names; and of the forty-eight men who applied for amended article on March 28, 1807, thirty-one could not sign their names. Furthermore, despite Richard Allen’s great talents and leadership skills, the early A.M.E. Church had no ordained African minister during its first twelve years of existence because the Methodist Discipline had no provision for the ordaining of Africans.²¹⁵

Allen was born a slave on February 14, 1760 in Philadelphia.²¹⁶ As a child he and his brother were allowed to attend Methodist Society meetings. At the age of seventeen

Bishop Francis Asbury in July 1794. Richard Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Philadelphia: Martin and Boden Printers, 1833), 15. The word Bethel means House of God and is Biblically significant as a place at which many important events occurred.

²¹⁵ Richard R. Wright, *The Bishops*, 15.

²¹⁶ Even though Allen was born in Philadelphia, his family was sold to Stokeley Sturgis, a planter and slave-owner in Dover, Delaware where he spent the early years of his life. Charles H. Wesley, *Richard Allen: Apostle of Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Press, 1935), 11.

he joined the Methodist Society. He bought his freedom for two thousand dollars in Continental money.²¹⁷ He traveled with white preachers and was given various preaching assignments by Bishop Francis Asbury.²¹⁸ Allen returned to Philadelphia in 1786, joined the all-white St. George Methodist Episcopal Church congregation and was given permission by the St. George trustees to preach and hold prayer meetings at 5 a.m. in the gallery of the church. Allen proposed that a separate church be established for the Africans, but both blacks and whites opposed his idea. Allen garnered a large following of Africans, which soon angered the officers and members of St. George.²¹⁹ Many scholars see Allen's move from St. George's as the beginning of the independent church movement among Negroes.²²⁰

Many of the early self-help and uplift efforts that laid the foundation for the A.M.E. Church were modeled after the life of Richard Allen and his personal portrayal of Methodism. The philosophies of self-help and uplift were common concepts in the

²¹⁷ Allen's purchase of his freedom not only attests to his hard work and persistent nature, but of his selfless and generous character, traits that will appear again and again and become part of the founding principles for the A.M.E. Church. Gary Nash wrote that "Not only able to pay for his freedom a year and a half ahead of schedule, he also presented the struggling Sturgis with a gift of eighteen bushels of salt, worth a guinea per bushel at the time, in consideration 'of uncommon kind Treatment of his Master during his Servitude'." Gary B. Nash, "New Light on Richard Allen: The Early Years of Freedom," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 46 (April 1989): 336.

²¹⁸ Francis Asbury was one of the first two bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. He came from Birmingham, England and was appointed as the superintendent of Methodist work in America by John Wesley. Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism*. See footnote 207 on page 111.

²¹⁹ Allen, *The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Reverend Richard Allen*, 15-17.

²²⁰ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* and Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*.

antebellum North, as noted in chapter one. Negroes were not given access to social services, houses of worship, institutions of education, or social organizations. There was a need to create these places and experiences and the Negro church, in particular the A.M.E. Church, provided a foundation for the establishment of such outlets. What made the A.M.E. Church stand apart from other self-help and racial uplift proponents was the Church's focus on Methodist principles, which included embracing middle class values of being thrifty, sober, neat, hard-working, and charitable.

It was believed that self-help and uplift would do two things for black people. First, black people who were not members of the church would emulate the middle class behavior of church members; also, it was hoped that nonmembers would be inspired to join. The church would thus provide a positive image for blacks and counteract the opinion of many whites that all Negroes were lazy and uncultured. Second, it was hoped that the image of success and morality provided by church members would dispel the web of prejudice and hatred, which surrounded black people in America.²²¹

The A.M.E. mission of self-help and racial uplift was promoted through the establishment of the first black-owned and operated publishing house, the Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, and through its newspaper, the *Christian Recorder*, which often reflected its social activism stance.²²² The schools which the Church established were the most visible sign of the ideals of racial uplift and self-help at work. In 1796, the trustees of Mother Bethel established a "free school to give the children and adults of the church

²²¹ Clarence E. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land: The African Methodist Episcopal Church during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 15.

²²² The Church was actively opposed to the efforts of the American Colonization Society and A.M.E. Church members are said to have participated and been implicated in the Denmark Vesey plot, which led to the banishment of black churches in South Carolina. The Church was also a safe haven for the Underground Railroad. In 1854, the A.M.E. committee on slavery passed several resolutions condemning slavery (Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 307-308).

reading lessons.”²²³ Education was extremely important to Bishop Allen. In 1833, two years after the Bishop’s death, the Church passed its first resolution on education and passed another resolution again in 1848.²²⁴ Several other resolutions were passed before the Civil War, but due to lack of money little else was done until the purchase of Wilberforce University.²²⁵

In order to begin to truly understand why and how the A.M.E. Church would and did erect an institution for higher learning, the life of Richard Allen must be thoroughly examined. From his personal character to the people with whom he associated to the activities in which he engaged, his life experiences and beliefs are what the A.M.E. Church and its philosophies were built upon.²²⁶ Allen organized the A.M.E. Church

²²³ Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land*, 14.

²²⁴ The first resolution was passed at the Ohio Conference and resolved “that common schools, Sunday school, and temperance societies are the highest importance to all people; but more especially to us as a people...it shall be the duty of every member of this conference to do all in his power to promote and establish these useful institutions among our people.” The resolution in 1848 was passed at the general conference and resolved that “each pastor of each principal church in the cities, establish a High School for the education of the rising generation.” See Daniel Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 98 and 220. Although the Church continued to participate in the creation of common schools and in Sunday/Sabbath schools, the establishment of high schools by the A.M.E. Church never came to fruition.

²²⁵ Grace Naomi Perry, “The Educational Work of the A.M.E. Church Prior to 1900” (master’s thesis, Howard University, 1948), 15-16 and 22. More about the purchase of Wilberforce University and the A.M.E. Church’s involvement in education will be discussed in chapter four.

²²⁶ While he admits to never having received any formal schooling or education it is clear that “his role as a shaper of thought and a builder of institutions was matched by few of his white contemporaries, and what he accomplished was done in the face of obstacles that most of them did not have to overcome....Never receiving formal education, he became an accomplished and eloquent writer, penning and publishing sermons, tracts, addresses, and remonstrances; compiling a hymnal; and drafting articles

based upon his personal experiences with and beliefs about the Methodist faith. When leaving St. George's Episcopal Church in 1787, a vote was taken as whether or not to align with the Church of England, and Allen wanted to remain connected to the Methodist Church,

Notwithstanding we had been so violently persecuted by the elder [Methodist Church], we were in favour of being attached to the Methodist connexion; for I was confident that there was no religious sect or denomination would suit the capacity of the coloured people as well as the Methodist; for the plain and simple gospel suits best for any people, for the unlearned can understand, and the learned are sure to understand; and the reason that the Methodist is so successful in the awakening and conversion of the coloured people, the plain doctrine and having a good discipline.²²⁷

The themes of loyalty, discipline, responsibility, morality, piety, and simplicity were repeated throughout Allen's life and form part of his influential philosophies on education, self-determination, and economic development, which in turn helped lead the A.M.E. Church to embrace education as a necessity.

Researchers, scholars, and ministers who knew and were influenced by him have documented the contributions and accomplishments of Richard Allen and tout him as many things: visionary founder, Christian educator, humble servant, tireless activist, proponent of rights for Africans, relationship builder, and the list goes on.²²⁸ Because he

of organization and governance for various organizations," Nash, "New Light on Richard Allen," 332.

²²⁷ Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours*, 16.

²²⁸ Woodson wrote that Allen "could not but succeed because he was a man of independent character, strict integrity, business tact, and thrifty habits. When he spoke a word, it was taken at its face value. His rule was never to break a promise or violate a contract," *History of the Negro Church*, 74. Noah Cannon, an A.M.E. minister, wrote in the first paragraph of his church history that Allen was "a worthy example for us to pattern after, as minister of Christ, for piety, wisdom and stability of mind; a brave soldier in due form....a venerable; valiant, reverend father in Christ, with a sympathetic

was a humble, quiet man of God, not fully literate and lacking the charisma of many of his peers and predecessors; beyond being acknowledged as the founder of the A.M.E. Church, many of his other contributions go unnoticed. This is evidenced by the lack of comprehensive written material about Richard Allen. Allen did compose his own autobiography and this is the only information available about Allen prior to 1816.²²⁹ Even in works that purport to discuss Allen's educational contributions, there is a lack of in-depth analysis and detail. In his book *Richard Allen: The First Exemplar of African American Education*, E. Curtis Alexander acknowledges and discusses Allen's contributions to black education. However, despite the book's title, Alexander only devotes one thirteen-page chapter to this subject. The chapter opens with an excerpt from a speech given by Prince Saunders regarding the educational plight of black folks in

feeling...." Noah Calwell Cannon, *A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, The only one in the United States of America, styled Bethel Church*, (Rochester, New York: Strong and Dawson Printers, 1842), 3. Finally, Horace Talbert, another A.M.E. minister wrote that Allen "was the embodiment of noble characteristics that enabled him to infuse and ideal manhood and womanhood into a people whose past was dim with antiquity and overshadowed with ignorance....Through Allen's achievements we rise to a greater knowledge of the God that raised him up for the wonderful work; a work that reveals him not only as a champion for his black brother, but also as one who stood for the cause of human rights and religious liberty for every soul on the face of the earth." Horace Talbert, *The Sons of Allen: Together with a Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Wilberforce University, Wilberforce, Ohio* (Xenia, Ohio: The Aldine Press, 1906), 24.

²²⁹ Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel*. In the A.M.E. Church history, Payne refers directly to Allen's autobiography in order to relay the life story of the Church's founder and first bishop. The autobiography is brief and lacking in self-promotion. Allen omits many accomplishments that others attribute to him. The fact that the autobiography was not found until 1850, in a trunk possessed by Allen's youngest daughter, speaks in part to Allen's humility. He did not think enough of his life and works to have the record published before his death. Humility is a personal characteristic of Allen's that will be discussed shortly as one of the founding principles of the A.M.E. Church.

Philadelphia.²³⁰ Appealing to the Christian sensibility of others to support the education of Negroes, Saunders' speech is primarily a supportive monologue for literary societies and the fact that the human mind can be expanded through such societies.

We hence decry some of the grounds for that invaluable importance which has uniformly been given to education, in supplying the mind with intellectual acquisitions, and for adorning it with those elevated accomplishments which have generally been considered as its peculiar fruits, by the virtuous and contemplative of every age and nation; where the genial influences of the Sun of Science have been experienced, and where the blessings of civilized society have been enjoyed. . . . Many, in different periods, by cultivating the arts and sciences, have contributed to human happiness and improvement, by that invincible zeal for moral virtue and intellectual excellence, which their example has inspired in other minds and hearts, as well as by the sublimity of those traces of truth with which they have illuminated the world, and dignified the intercourse of civilized society. . . . Wherever these lofty and commanding views of piety and virtue have been encouraged, a high sense of the social, moral, and practical obligations and duties of life, have been cherished and cultivated with an elevated and an invincible spirit. . . . Under the influence of this spirit, this benevolent spirit, practical Christians of every denomination, have elevated their views far beyond the circumscribed boundaries of selfishness, sectarianism, and party seal; and, being bound together by the indissoluble links of that golden chain of charity and kind affection, with which Christianity invariably connects its sincere votaries, and standing upon the common ground of Christian equality, they encircle the great community of those who profess the religion of our divine Master, in the arms of charity and love, and become co-workers and

²³⁰ The speech that Saunders delivered was given at Bethel Church in Philadelphia (Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church) and was titled "An address delivered at Bethel Church, Philadelphia on the 30th of September, 1818, before the Pennsylvania Augustine Society for the education of people of colour." The Pennsylvania Augustine Society was a secular organization created for "social, literary, educational, welfare, and political purposes," *Black Philanthropy and Volunteerism in the Early Republic* <http://www.ksghome.harvard.edu/~phall/05.Blacks.pdf> (accessed June 22, 2009), an online resource work in progress by Peter Dobkin Hall, *Documentary History of Philanthropy, Volunteerism, and Nonprofit Organizations in the United States, 1600 to present*. The Negroes living in Philadelphia were considered to be some of the most well-organized and vocal in expressing the plight and needs of Negroes post-slavery. Prince Saunders was "a leading light among Philadelphia's black elite" and a member, maybe even president of the Pennsylvania Augustine Society. Richard Newman, Patrick Rael, and Phillip Lapsansky, Eds. *Pamphlets of Protest: An Anthology of Early African American Protest Literature, 1790-1860* (Routledge: New York, 2001), 80.

fellow-labourers in the illumination, the improvement, and the ultimate felicity of those who will, undoubtedly, eventually belong to the commonwealth of the Israel of our God. . . .The hope is encouraged, that you will never be weary in laboring for the promotion of the cause and interests of science and literature among the rising generation of the people of colour. For upon their intellectual, moral and religious improvements, depend the future elevation of their standing, in the social, civil and ecclesiastical community. . . .Therefore, let it be the unceasing labour, the undeviating and the inflexibly firm purpose of the members of this Association, individually and collectively, to inspire all within the sphere of their influence, with a sense of the value and importance of giving their children a good education. . . . Permit me to again entreat you, duly to appreciate the importance of religiously educating your children. For a Christian education is not only of great utility while sojourning in this scene of discipline and probation, but it is more transcendently excellent in that more elevated scene of human destination to which we are hastening.²³¹

Saunders's words also align well with the emerging philosophy of education for the A.M.E. Church, what would later be included at Wilberforce University in terms of literary societies, and the Christian ideals upheld by Richard Allen, which is why Alexander chose to open the chapter on Allen's educational contributions with a quote from Saunders.

Perhaps the lack of research on Richard Allen and his educational efforts are due in part to what Payne discovered as he began to collect the history of the A.M.E. Church. The first two bishops of the church did not keep "daily private records of their private and public lives."²³² The majority of the early history of the church is based upon what was recorded at the general conferences. The daily activities of individual ministers or

²³¹ Prince Saunders, "An Address before the Pennsylvania Augustine Society, 1818," in *Pamphlets of Protest: An Anthology of Early African American Protest Literature, 1790-1860*, eds. Richard Newman, Patrick Rael, Phillip Lapsansky (New York: Routledge, 2001), 80-83.

²³² Daniel Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, vii.

bishops were not recorded as meticulously, if at all.²³³ Further, his son Richard Allen, Jr., who was fourteen years old at the time, wrote that which was written about Allen, including the minutes of two general conferences.²³⁴ Payne apparently found two journals, one belonging to Allen and the other to one of the local preachers, Joseph M. Corr. Both journals had not been protected by the elements and were thus illegible. Thus, aside from conference minutes, all that could be offered to Payne as he attempted to write the Church's history was "nothing but 'tradition,' and that [even that] was contradictory."²³⁵

Despite the lack of comprehensive evidence pertaining to Allen, his contributions are significant. His personal convictions and character must be located within the context of the era in which he lived. It was a time that was ripe for and conducive to change. Ministers, especially Negro clergy, were lauded as the leaders of not only their congregations, but of their communities and often held up as exemplars of their race.

To the Negro community the preacher is this [spiritual leader] and besides the walking encyclopedia, the counselors of the unwise, the friend of the unfortunate, the social welfare organizer, and the interpreter of the signs of the times. No man is properly introduced to the Negro community unless he comes through the minister, and no movement can expect success there unless it has his cooperation or endorsement. The rise of the Negro physician has during recent years comparatively diminished the influence

²³³ Another fact affecting the collecting and recording of historical information about the Church is a resolution that was passed by the Church prohibiting the "publishing of any works touching the history, doctrine, or discipline of our Church unless permission was given," Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 160. This fact alone limits what was produced by and about the Church.

²³⁴ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, v.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

of the Negro preacher, but the latter is still the greater force in the community and will remain so.²³⁶

Allen's work is even more significant given the fact that the majority of the changes he advocated for did not come to fruition until after his death in 1831. Because documentation of his hands-on work with and through the A.M.E. Church is sparse, his own words will be used in order to gain perspective into his character and how his personal attributes shaped and supported the church in its continuous efforts to promote self-determination and racial uplift. Other leaders, members, and supporters of the A.M.E. Church, especially in the work towards building institutions of education, carried on his pro-abolitionist, pro-education, and pro-moral piety messages.

Testaments to his desire for a life better than that which Africans were experiencing as slaves and newly freed people can be seen as early as when Allen was a young slave child in Delaware. Attention will now be given to various documents and articles (published and unpublished) to which Allen contributed.

The Free African Society and the Doctrines of Discipline

Although there were other men present on the day the free Africans left St. George's Episcopal Church, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones were the primary founders of the Free African Society (FAS) with the intent to offer mutual aid and religious support to the free Africans living in Philadelphia.²³⁷ The *Preamble of the Free African Society* describes the persistence with which this organization was pursued and

²³⁶ Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 281.

²³⁷ See footnote 207 on page 111 in this chapter. It is not clear if the FAS was formed before or after Allen and Absalom left St. George's, but both events took place in 1787.

sets the tone for the behavior the society would accept and condone and for the values it would embrace. Further, the tenets espoused in the articles of the preamble are those which Allen would champion throughout his theological career and which would become part of the doctrines of discipline of the A.M.E. Church. Due to its initial intent to be a religious society, the FAS preamble stressed moral behavior and piety. Members were required to “. . . live an orderly and sober life . . .,” and “. . . no drunkard nor disorderly person [will] be admitted as a member, and if any should prove disorderly after having been received, the said disorderly personal shall be disjointed from us without having any of his subscription money returned.”²³⁸ The articles of the FAS further stressed economic development and responsibility, along with support of the needy. The articles of the preamble begin with the following words:

We, the free Africans and their descendants, of the City of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, or elsewhere, do unanimously agree, for the benefit of each other, to advance one shilling in silver. . . . and after one year’s subscription from the date hereof, then to had forth to the needy of this Society, if any should require, the sum of three shillings and nine pence per week of the said money. . . . And if any should neglect paying this monthly subscription for three months, and after having been informed of the same by two of the members. . . . he shall be disjointed from us. . . .²³⁹

Equally important were the notions of community support, education, and employment.

And we apprehend it to be necessary, that the children of our deceased members be under the care of the Society, so far as to pay for the

²³⁸ *Preamble of the Free African Society*, April 12, 1778. William Douglas, *Annals of the First African Church in the United States of America Now Styled the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: King and Baird Printers, 1862). For the full text see Appendix A.

²³⁹ *Preamble of the Free African Society*, April 12, 1778.

education of their children, if they cannot attend the free school; also to put them out apprentices to suitable trades or places, if required.²⁴⁰

These values, put forth by Allen were also given emphasis in the A.M.E. Church's *Doctrines and Discipline*.²⁴¹

Allen, being the first Bishop of the A.M.E. Church, without a doubt participated in the penning of the *Doctrines and Discipline*.²⁴² They continue to reflect his interpretation of Christian life and duty. The *Doctrines and Discipline* further set the tone for the way individuals should comport themselves and for how business should be conducted within and on behalf of the Church. Chapter One, section one are the "Articles of Religion." Within this first section, Allen helps to set forth some important tenets that explain not only his own actions, but also how the Church approached the subject of education.

Chapter one, section one, article nine is titled "Of the Justification of Man." This article sets the tone for the characteristic of humility. This is followed by article ten "Of Good Works," and article eleven "Of Works of Supererogation," which further enforce the position that deeds should be done without seeking acknowledgement or adulation for accomplishment.

IX. Of the Justification of Man. We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. . . . X. Of Good Works. Although good

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ The *Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* was published in 1817 (one year after the first conference) and is the guide to the history, beliefs, and practices of the early Church.

²⁴² Allen is listed as the publisher along with Jacob Tapsico on this first edition and his signature appears in the introduction along with those of Rev. Daniel Coker and Rev. James Champion.

works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments: yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith. . . . XI. Of Works of Supererogation. Voluntary works, besides, over and above God's commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required. . . .²⁴³

These articles give some indication as to why there is limited printed information on Richard Allen and the A.M.E. Church prior to the publication of the *A.M.E. Review* and the *Christian Recorder*. The Church through its doctrines did not encourage the promotion of one's works. Given that many of the early Church leaders were not literate men, there is not much reason to believe that they thought of preserving their actions for historical posterity. And even if they did, in some ways recording one's accomplishments has a tone of self-promotion, which is clearly frowned upon. Richard Allen is an excellent exemplar for the Church, its leaders, and members of walking in humility. But his deference to humility came at an historical cost.

Article five "The Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation," speaks very clearly to the unbreakable connection between education and religion for the A.M.E. Church.

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, not may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: John H. Cunningham, Printer, 1817), 15-17.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

This article presents a theme that resounds throughout all of Negro Christianity, that nothing but the Bible and its words are needed to live a life that is acceptable and pleasing to God. In an era in which nothing but prayers and songs to God seemed to have delivered the slaves to freedom, it is easy to understand why any other form of direction would not seem necessary. Based upon this article, it is clear how the early A.M.E. proponents of education had to continuously couch their advocacy in the scripture. It was Richard Allen's intent to support education, but his work towards education began with Sunday and Sabbath schools and with educating the ministry.²⁴⁵ Education was almost always spoken of and written about within the context of salvation.

Allen Speaks Up for the Negro Race

Aside from his work within and for the Church Allen was involved in efforts to help change and improve the status of the Negro. This included speaking out against the African Colonization Movement, promoting economic self-sufficiency and education, and correcting misperceptions of the Negro. There are four documented examples of Allen's work as an advocate for justice.²⁴⁶ In 1794, there was a deadly yellow fever outbreak in the city of Philadelphia. Allen, Absalom Jones, and some other Negroes volunteered to assist with the sick and dying. In the midst of their work they were

²⁴⁵ See pages 88-89 of this dissertation for a discussion and explanation of the Sunday and Sabbath schools.

²⁴⁶ Each of these messages will be analyzed separately as a way of enforcing the notion that Richard Allen's words and works laid the foundation for the racial uplift and self-help efforts of the A.M.E. Church: "A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People during the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia," "An Address to Those who Keep Slaves, and Approve the Practice," "To the People of Colour," and "A Short Address to the Friends of Him who Hath No Helper."

accused of taking advantage of the ailing individuals and their families. In a published pamphlet entitled “A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People during the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia,” Allen, along with Jones, sets forth an example of speaking up to protect and defend the character of Negroes and of speaking up to maintain the rights of Negroes. They also display the tenets of offering non-discriminatory charity. Holding to the principles of charity set forth in the articles of the FAS, Allen explains how the Negroes of Philadelphia became involved in aiding the mostly white afflicted population,

Early in September, a solicitation appeared in the public papers, to the people of colour to come forward and assist the distressed, perishing, and neglected sick; with a kind of assurance, that people of our colour were not liable to take the infection. Upon which we, [members of the FAS] and a few others met and consulted how to act on so truly alarming and melancholy an occasion. After some conversation, we found a freedom to go forth, confiding in him who can preserve in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, sensible that it was our duty to do all the good we could to our suffering fellow mortals. We set out to see where we could be useful.²⁴⁷

He goes on to explain that they offered their services without seeking a fee or reward and

we made no charge, but left it to those we served in removing their dead, to give what they thought fit – we set no price, until the reward was fixed by those we had served. After paying the people we had to assist us, our compensation is much less than many will believe.²⁴⁸

Finally, Allen emphasizes that as unpleasant as this montage may seem, it is necessary for the clearing up of misconceptions and that upholding of the character of Negroes.

²⁴⁷ Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, “A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People during the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia,” as reprinted in *Pamphlets of Protest: An Anthology of Early African American Protest Literature, 1790-1860* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 33.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

Maintaining an image that portrayed sobriety, productivity, honesty, and humility was important to Allen and other leaders of the A.M.E. Church.

We wish not to offend, but when an unprovoked attempt is made, to make us blacker than we are, it becomes less necessary to be over cautious on that account, therefore we shall take the liberty to tell of the conduct of some of the whites. . . . It is unpleasant for us to make these remarks, but justice to our colour, demands it.²⁴⁹

Allen's voice for justice can be heard speaking out against slavery.²⁵⁰ "An Address to Those who Keep Slaves, and Approve the Practice" shows up twice in Allen's work; once in the above mentioned pamphlet and again in his autobiography. In just a few paragraphs Allen poetically stated that the people held in slavery are more human than their owners believe, that slavery is un-Godly, and that slave owners should let their slaves go free.

The judicious part of mankind, will think it unreasonable, that a superior good conduct is looked for from our race, by those who stigmatize us as men, whose baseness is incurable, and may therefore be held in a state of servitude, that a merciful man would not doom a beast to; yet you try what you can, to prevent our rising from a state of barbarism you represent us to be in, but we can tell you from a degree of experience, that a black man, although reduced to the most abject state human nature is capable of, short of real madness, can think, reflect, and feel injuries, although it may not be with the same degree of keen resentment and revenge, that you who have been, and are our great oppressors would manifest, if reduced to the pitiable condition of a slave. . . . Will you, because you have reduced us to the unhappy condition our color is in, plead our incapacity for freedom, and our contented condition under oppression, as a sufficient cause for keeping us under the grievous yoke. . . . Many have been convicted of their

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 36 and 38.

²⁵⁰ Speaking out against slavery was a tradition that the A.M.E. Church would continue long after Allen's death. See footnote 218, page 115.

error, condemned their former conduct, and become zealous advocates for the cause of those, whom you will not suffer to plead for themselves.²⁵¹

Complementing his thoughts against slavery were Allen's thoughts on the African colonization movement. The *Freedom's Journal* requested that Bishop Allen write his thoughts on colonization in order to set the record straight as to his opinion on the matter.²⁵² The A.M.E. Church was an opponent of the colonization movement and slavery, even assisting in the Underground Railroad. Allen's message spoke to that sentiment and also subtly hinted at the need for Negroes to be educated.

I have for several years been striving to reconcile my mind, to the colonization of Africa in Liberia, but there have always been, and there still remain great and insurmountable objections against the scheme. We are an unlettered people, brought up in ignorance; not one in a hundred can read or write; not one in a thousand has a liberal education. Is there any fitness for such to be sent into a far country, among Heathens, to convert or civilize them; then they themselves are neither civilized nor christianized? . . . Is there any fitness for such a people to be colonized in a far country, to be their own rulers? Can we not discern the project of sending the free people of colour away from this country? Is it not for the interest of the slave holder, to select, the free people of colour out of the different states, and send them to Liberia? Will it not make their slaves uneasy to see free men of colour enjoying liberty? . . . If all the people in Europe and America were as ignorant, and in the same situation as our brethren, what would become of the world; where would be the principle or piety that would govern the people? We were stolen from our mother country and brought here. We have tilled the ground and made fortunes for thousands, and still they are not weary of our services. But they who stay to till the ground must be slaves. Is there no land enough in America, or "corn enough in Egypt?" why would they send us into a far country to die? . . . This land which we have watered with our tears and our blood,

²⁵¹ "An Address to Those who Keep Saves and Approve the Practice," from Richard Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Philadelphia: Martin and Boden Printers, 1833). See Appendix B for full text.

²⁵² This letter being requested by and submitted to this newspaper is significant because it is one of the few Negro newspapers that was being published during the time in which Richard Allen was alive.

is now our mother country and we are well satisfied to stay where wisdom abounds, and the gospel is free.²⁵³

In “To the People of Colour” (also part of his autobiography), Allen addresses the free Negroes and sets the tone for them to be engaged in racial uplift and self-help. Through sharing his feelings of when he was a slave, Allen attempts to provide encouragement and motivation to the slaves to not accept the status quo. Both are presented within the auspices of Christian faith and Christian duty. To the slaves he wrote:

. . . having been a slave, and as desirous of freedom as any of you; yet the bands of bondage were so strong that no way appeared for my release; yet at times a hope arose in my heart that away would open for it; and when my mind was mercifully visited with the feeling of love of God, then these hopes increased, and a confidence arose that he would make way for my enlargement; . . . I mention experience to you, that your hearts may not sink at the discouraging prospects you may have, and that you may put your trust in God, who sees your condition; . . . and as your hearts are inclined to serve God, you will feel an affectionate regard towards your masters and mistresses, so called, and the whole family in which you live.²⁵⁴

To the freed Negroes he wrote:

Much depends upon us for the help of our colour – more than many are aware. If we are lazy and idle, the enemies of freedom plead it as a cause why we ought not to be free, and say we are better in a state of servitude, and that giving us our liberty would be an injury to us, and by such conduct we strengthen the bands of oppression, and keep many in bondage who are more worthy than ourselves. I entreat you to consider the obligations we lie under to help forward the cause of freedom. We who know how bitter the cup is of which the slave hath to drink, O how ought we to feel for those who yet remain in bondage! Will even our friends excuse – will God pardon us – for the part we act in making strong the hand of the enemies of our colour?²⁵⁵

²⁵³ “Letter from Bishop Allen,” *Freedom’s Journal* 1 (November 2, 1827): 2.

²⁵⁴ Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours*, 47.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

Finally, in “A Short Address to the Friends of Him Who Hath no Helper” Allen holds strong to his role as a minister and bishop and reiterates the principles presented in the FAS articles and in the *Doctrines and Discipline*. In quoting from the Ten Commandments Allen reminds the reader that assisting and giving to others should be done without discrimination and that it is a responsibility that should be sought without hope of reward or compensation.

From these few passages may be collected the nature, extent, and necessity of Christian charity. In its nature it is pure and disinterested, remote from all hopes or views of worldly return or recompence from the persons we relieve. We are to do good and lend, hoping for nothing again. In its extent it is unlimited and universal; and though it requires that an especial regard be had to our fellow Christians, is confined to no persons, countries, or places, but takes in all mankind, strangers as well as relations or acquaintances, enemies as well as friends, the evil and unthankful, as well as the good and grateful.²⁵⁶

Because of his unique position as a pioneer for Negroes in the eighteenth century, Richard Allen wore many hats; he was an educator and also an advocate for the rights of Negroes. He was most obviously a minister and a bishop and his faith and belief in God and Christian principles grounded his work and message, whether it was secular or faith-based.

While there may not be a plethora of printed material written or spoken by Richard Allen, what is available shows how Allen laid the foundation for the principles of morality and Christian living, education, racial uplift, self-help, and self-determination which would drive the work the A.M.E. Church would do after his death. Daniel Payne is one man who carried Allen’s torch and added his own, often controversial, flare.

²⁵⁶ Richard Allen, “A Short Address to the Friends of Him Who Hath no Helper,” in *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Philadelphia: Martin and Bolden Printers, 1833), 49-60

CHAPTER FIVE
DANIEL ALEXANDER PAYNE AND THE A.M.E. CHURCH
PURSUIT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

African Methodist Episcopal Church Leaders

Despite the fact that the African Methodist Episcopal Church created the first black-owned publishing house and published the first black quarterly paper and created the first historically black college, documentation on the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and its leaders is sketchy at best. By sketchy I mean that there is not sufficient information available on all of the founders of the church, the information available is often incomplete or missing from the archives (or has been destroyed by fire or flood), and usually only one, two, or at the most three key A.M.E. people are profiled in any detail (Richard Allen and Daniel Payne are two of the men with the most information available). This lack of complete and detailed information is due in part to the fact that many of the early leaders of the church were illiterate and relied on sons of Bishops to act as secretaries during the annual general conferences.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Although Richard Allen was able to read and write his abilities were limited and his fourteen year old son acted as secretary for the first two A.M.E. Church conferences. Bishop Morris Brown (as were some other Church leaders) was illiterate and Payne, who was literate, acted as Brown's private secretary. Typically the "best-educated" ministers or the sons of ministers and bishops were appointed as secretaries of the general conferences (Daniel Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 94, 111, and 220).

The founders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church were all unlearned men. The most intelligent of the sixteen who organized the connection was Daniel Coker, at the time a school master in the city of Baltimore. In the Philadelphia Conference the most intelligent and best trained intellect was Joseph M. Corr.... He appears as secretary of the Baltimore Conference in 1826. English Methodism under Johan and Charles Wesley began its career with founding a school of learning for the sons of its preachers, and one for the children of poor colliers. Not so with African Methodism in America, because Allen and his coadjutors were illiterate men. They founded no institution of learning, and there is no trace of a thought in their minds about a school of learning...it was not until 1833 that we hear the first voices speaking out on the subject.²⁵⁸

Aside from the fact that over the decades flames have claimed the outer brick and mortar and the documents stored within of several A.M.E. churches and colleges, the Church has also been protective of its records, which contributes to the difficulty in obtaining accurate and complete information. One early example of how the Church worked to protect its records can be seen at the Annual Conference for the Baltimore District of 1819.

The first duty of the Conference was to appoint a doorkeeper, whose instructions were to admit no one without the leave of the chair. A resolution was also passed that no member of the Conference should leave the room without the permission of the chair; while still another resolution tending toward the secretary and safety of the proceedings of the Conference, was one by Doc C. Hall, to the effect that the steward shall not present or show the books or papers of the Annual Conference to any person or persons without the permission of the superintendent.²⁵⁹

This resolution speaks to the historical guardedness of the A.M.E. Church and the lack of readily available information to non-A.M.E. individuals. The majority of what is recorded and available about the A.M.E. Church has been written by church leaders (ministers, bishops, and division secretaries). Most of these records are found in the

²⁵⁸ Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 393-394.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

Annual Budget reports, the *A.M.E. Church Review* and in the *Christian Recorder*. Not much about the church or its leaders can be found in non-A.M.E. publications save a few dissertations and books that grew out of dissertations.²⁶⁰ The church, a proud and self-reliant organization, has typically written about itself in a glorious and adulated manner.

Not without justification, much of what is recorded about the Church leaders and the A.M.E. college presidents is a celebration of accomplishments. The memoirs of Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne are no exception to the A.M.E. celebratory tone. There are only two biographical documents aimed exclusively at the life of Bishop Payne.²⁶¹ Payne himself wrote an autobiography entitled *Recollections of Seventy Years* and an A.M.E. minister (who wrote the introduction to Payne's *Recollections of Seventy Years*), Charles S. Smith, wrote *The Life of Daniel Alexander Payne* in 1894. Both accounts tell a story of a man who, orphaned at a young age, overcame the effects of slavery to one day purchase the first university in North America to be owned and operated by African Americans.²⁶² *Recollections of Seventy Years* not only provides a glimpse into the life of Daniel A. Payne, but also chronicles seventy years of A.M.E. Church history.

²⁶⁰ Two examples of this include James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* and Lawrence S. Little, *Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism, 1884-1916*. Other sources are listed in footnotes number three and twelve in the introductory chapter.

²⁶¹ There are several dissertations that include Payne as one of the primary subjects of interest, but in terms of published biographical works only two seem to exist.

²⁶² While Wilberforce University was initially created by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1856, it was not purchased by Payne on behalf of the A.M.E. Church from the predominantly white Methodist Episcopal Church until 1863. The confusion in establishment dates often arises because the A.M.E. Church did create an institution for higher learning called Union Seminary and Farm, which later merged with the M.E. Church's institution to create Wilberforce as we know it today.

The introduction written by Reverend C.S. Smith sets the reader up for a potential praise and glory account of Payne's life. Smith describes Payne as "indefatigable," as the "highest and purest and best," and as someone who is "lifted above all selfish aims and desires."²⁶³ In this book, Smith described how many the 19th and 20th century scholars and A.M.E. ministers and laypeople view Payne. Payne however, does not paint such a glorified picture of himself and it becomes increasingly clear with each page that his eighteenth century colleagues did not always hold him in such high esteem. The story Payne writes about himself is honest and humble and not always glorious. He is well aware of the fact that his peers were not always in agreement with him, did not usually think much of him, and did not always welcome him.²⁶⁴

It is difficult to withhold admiration from a man who went from being an orphaned (at age eight), poor, Southern black boy to a well-traveled, eloquent, educated college president. Payne was a shoe merchant, a carpenter, a student, a school owner, a minister, a bishop, and a college president. He sought opportunities that were unimaginable to blacks in the early 1800s. He grew up in the South, before slavery ended, when it was nearly impossible and illegal for blacks to obtain an education of any sort. Yet Payne managed to obtain an education, create his own forums for teaching, and continually persist to be treated as a man with rights as he proselytized the need for and benefits of education for blacks. He never took a moment to bewail or bemoan his misfortunes, but instead sought out opportunities to enhance his life and that of others.

²⁶³ From the Introduction to Daniel Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years*, written by Charles S. Smith, 5.

²⁶⁴ See, for example, story below of Payne's appointment to Ebenezer Church in Baltimore.

Through ailing health, near blindness, and lack of resources he was a tireless warrior for the progress and uplift of his people.

Payne's writing is detailed yet sketchy. He has essays published in a variety of magazines and journals, but there is no comprehensive bibliography of his work. He admits that there were times that he did not always keep a journal and it is not clear how much of his recollections are from memory or how much he actually wrote down. He did serve as the Church's first historian, so it may be assumed that he did write much of his journey down on paper. Also because he was the Church's first historian and took it upon himself to compile and edit the A.M.E. Church history, Payne's voice can be heard throughout the chapters of the A.M.E. history book as he interjects written commentary and opinion. For a man who truly did not receive a complete formal education, his writing is replete with vivid imagery and an eloquence which is equal to that of a man who has been formally educated. In this chapter I discuss the educational philosophies of Payne and other A.M.E. leaders, followed by discussion of Wilberforce University and Morris Brown College.

Despite initial resistance from church members and leaders, Payne continued to speak and write about the importance of education. Payne had a very strong personal educational philosophy, which contributed to his work within the A.M.E. Church. Payne was educated for two years at the Minors' Moral Society School, which was established to "educate orphan or indigent colored children."²⁶⁵ He then had private instruction for three years by the "most popular school-master in the city."²⁶⁶ From there

²⁶⁵ Payne, *Recollections*, 14.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

he “read every book within my reach I resolved to devote every moment of leisure to study books, and every cent to the purchase of them.”²⁶⁷ Payne continued in this self-educating manner until he studied theology under the Lutheran Church through the Society of Inquiry on Missions at Gettysburg because Dr. Martin, a Lutheran minister, sought to “educate a talented, pious young man of color for the intellectual, moral, and social elevation of the freed colored people in the country.”²⁶⁸

Upon his appointment to Ebenezer Church in Baltimore the church rejected him. The stewards informed him that “at the official board meeting that the people had held a meeting previous to my coming, and had decided to reject me . . . the people had no fault to find with my character,” except for that he was considered too proud and had already stated his objection to the “spiritual songs” they sung. He refused this church appointment on the basis that “if they did not want me, I did not want them.” In his first years as Bishop he also was rejected. “Twice within the first eighteen months of my bishopric was I rejected by people, and it was exceedingly difficult to procure accommodations, as our people did not know me and were not inclined to entertain strangers.”²⁶⁹ There was no logical reason for why Payne was rejected by people other than their misperceptions of him.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 15 and 18.

²⁶⁸ Ibid. Prior to leaving Charleston, Payne had been given various letters of introduction to take with him up North and he presented one of these letters to Rev. Daniel Strobel of the Lutheran Church, who referred him to Dr. Martin.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 93-94, 112.

As the sixth Bishop of the A.M.E. Church, Payne's membership marks a turning point in the early history of the Church.²⁷⁰ While consistent and detailed records were not always kept, there is sufficient evidence about the activities of Daniel Alexander Payne to note that his work within and contributions to and for the A.M.E. Church assisted the Church in reaching a new and more prominent level in the United States, in particular in the arena of education. This chapter will provide examples of his speeches and writings which proved his fervent support for education, which eventually led to the A.M.E. Church developing institutions of higher education.

Church-Affiliated Colleges: Union Seminary and Wilberforce University

Church-affiliated colleges have existed since the colonial days in North America.²⁷¹ Following the Revolutionary War, free blacks established African churches, African private schools, and African fraternal organizations in both Northern and Southern cities where they could worship, educate their children, and protect

²⁷⁰ It is clear from the A.M.E. Church history that Payne's election to Bishop came with a small yet quietly passed controversy, which should have been a clear indication of his journey as a church leader: "...the polls were opened, and the result was the election of Rev. Willis Nazrey, of Philadelphia, Pa., a native of Virginia, and D.A. Payne, of Baltimore, Md., a native of Charleston, S.C. On the Following Thursday they were both consecrated to that responsible office by the Rt. Rev. William P. Quinn, assisted by several elders. There are powerful reasons why I should here state that while both men were elected at the same time, and Nazrey by nine more votes than Payne, the latter was the first upon whom ordination was confirmed, which established the right of seniority, because it is not mere election that constitutes a Bishop. If five or ten men were elected at a time, and the first ordained is necessarily the senior of all who may be elected by the same ballot," Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 273-274.

²⁷¹ Robert L. Church and Michael W. Sedlack, "The Antebellum College and Academy" in *The History of Higher Education ASHE Reader* (2nd ed.), 131-148; and Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History*, 10-11

themselves.²⁷² Many of the church-related schools, as well as literary societies, fraternal organizations, and lending libraries, were supported by occasional aid from white churches, black and white personal donations, and funds that were raised at black bazaars, fairs, plays, lectures, church suppers, and church parades. The main support however, was black. Many founders and leaders of these schools and organizations were black ministers, many of who assumed dominant positions in the black communities.²⁷³

The 1800s can be characterized as a time of significant and substantial change in the United States. The Civil War brought an end to slavery and as I described in chapter one, the government created the Freedmen's Bureau, but individual church denominations also created their own freedmen's bureaus. The Methodist Episcopal Church established its Freedmen's Bureau in 1865 to assist newly freed slaves adjust to the life that had been going on around them and their new role in that society. 1865 was a busy year that not only saw the creation of organizations aimed at assisting Negroes, but also saw the creation of organizations aimed at intimidating and harming Negroes. That same year the Ku Klux Klan established itself in order to intimidate and harass blacks in the South. Reconstruction provided a window of opportunity that saw Negro men voting, running for and winning public office, opening businesses, and attending college. Some of these windows of opportunity opened before slavery ended, thus providing some individuals and organizations with a road to racial uplift. The African Methodist Episcopal Church was one of those institutions that took advantage of

²⁷² Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, 4-32.

²⁷³ Roebuck and Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, 22.

conditions that appeared conducive to pursuing and establishing opportunities for Negroes.

Between 1886 and 1890, the Church established nine colleges (not including theological seminaries) – four two-year institutions (none of which exist today) and five four-year institutions.²⁷⁴ Brief histories of the origins of these institutions are scattered throughout various books on historically black colleges and universities. The most comprehensive historical information available is on Wilberforce University and Morris Brown College. Although Stowell recorded the efforts of the predominantly white Methodist Church to establish colleges for Negroes,²⁷⁵ the A.M.E. Church differed from the predominantly white Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, and other denominations in that the A.M.E. Church's creation of educational institutions was done by Negro men for the Negro population.²⁷⁶ Black church and black education scholars such as C. Eric Lincoln and James Anderson acknowledge that the A.M.E. Church's ability to establish these institutions, during a time when Negroes were barely being given the opportunity to pursue citizenship, is nothing short of amazing. The A.M.E.

²⁷⁴ Wilberforce University, 1856 in Xenia, Ohio; Edward Waters College, 1866 in Jacksonville, Florida; Paul Quinn College, 1872 in Waco, Texas; Morris Brown College, 1885 in Atlanta, Georgia; Allen University, 1870 in Columbia, South Carolina; Shorter College (now owned by University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), 1886 in North Little Rock, Arkansas; and Kittrell College (no longer in existence), 1886 in Kittrell, North Carolina; Daniel Payne College (no longer in existence), 1889 in Birmingham, Alabama; and Campbell College, 1890 in Jackson, Mississippi.

²⁷⁵ Jay S. Stowell, *Methodist Adventures in Negro Education* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1922).

²⁷⁶ Thus far in my research men dominated the meetings and activities concerning the A.M.E. Church. Women begin to be mentioned by name during the early years of Wilberforce as teachers.

Church is considered to be the leader in establishing institutions of education for blacks in America.²⁷⁷

As mentioned in chapter one, the A.M.E. Church, like many black organizations and institutions, grew out of an unmet need. As a beacon of light for the future, the Church encouraged every minister to establish schools in and around the churches to which they were appointed. At the 1834 Philadelphia Conference the Church adopted the following resolution:

It shall be the duty of every minister who has charge of a circuit or station, to use every effort to establish schools wherever convenient and to insist upon parents of children sending them to school.²⁷⁸

This resolution began with the education of the clergy, and at the elementary and secondary school levels. Prior to this resolution, which will be discussed later in this chapter, Payne was observant of the fact that the Church had not made any progress towards educating its ministers or towards providing education for the younger generation. Having learned his lesson about being too proud and being rejected from his first post as a minister, in the quote below Payne was careful to soften the blow of his comments so as to not offend any of his colleagues of the cloth, this time couching his criticism underneath the context of the time in which they lived, which hampered any efforts there may have been to promote education among Negroes. However, his point on the importance of education is still clearly made. Payne's advocacy for education and criticism of the Church's slow progress to embrace this value will be discussed shortly as

²⁷⁷ James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 240; C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 52-53. It was not until 1868 when Africans (former slaves living in the South) were acknowledged by the Constitution of the United States as being citizens.

²⁷⁸ Payne, *The History of the A.M.E. Church*, 98.

it is a theme that eventually lands the A.M.E. Church in the position of owning a college.

In 1825 in his reflections about the Church's first decade Payne commented that

...we find no traces of any efforts for literary improvement among the ministers, nor the education of the rising generation through any agency of the Conferences. The absence of any efforts for literary improvement among the ministers, and the want of any means of education among the rising generation, and the total absence of Sunday-schools, are all to be regretted, but the condition of affairs here indicated cannot altogether be attributed to any apathy upon part of the Church. Perhaps the literary improvement in the ministry might be considered the fault of the individual minister; but it must not be forgotten that the men appointed to the positions of elders and deacons were all full grown, and had reached manhood before they were so appointed. Many of them had had not opportunities to lay the foundation of an education, even of a most rudimentary kind, in their youth, the time in which education should be commenced....Many of the ministers did improve, however, and showed that improvement in the course of their lives. The absence of education, however, is to be regretted, as, if the men composing the Conferences had known what lay before them, we might have been able to more fully understand their position, and to judge of their actions. While that no provisions were made for the education of the rising generation might be slightly attributed to the neglect of the ministers, yet the portion of the blame attaching itself to the Church is so small that no one can fairly say they were essentially the cause of this neglect. The education of the colored population of the states in which the majority of the members of the African Methodist Church were located was strictly forbidden. Herein lies the chief cause of the lack of effort upon the part of the Church to increase its members. No one who has given these laws even the most cursory glance can blame the Church for shrinking from the pursuit of this cause; besides, any such efforts as might lead to the spread of education among the colored people, the great proportion of whom were slaves, would not only have called down the law upon the heads of the offenders, but even, as we will afterwards see, have endangered the very existence of the Church itself.²⁷⁹

Payne's commentary was a stark reminder that the A.M.E. Church was founded before slavery had ended and that the Church itself with three conferences (Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York) was a testament to the courage, determination, persistence, and strength of Negroes in the late 1700s and through the 1800s. The Church found itself

²⁷⁹ Ibid., "Chapter VIII: The First Decade," 52-53.

being kicked out of South Carolina due to the 1822 slave rebellion led by Denmark Vesey because the church “gave the idea and produced the sentiment of personal freedom and responsibility in the Negro,”²⁸⁰ which did not sit well with the South Carolina slaveholders. Maybe the Church’s pursuit and discussions of creating an institution of higher education got derailed by having to rally around congregations who were displaced in South Carolina, maybe the Church got derailed by the angry sentiments of slave owners in the South, or maybe the Church was trying to garner enough resources. The reasons for the delay in vigorously pursuing the creation of an institution of higher education is not clear, but after the 1834 resolution was passed the Church argued passionately about supporting an institution of education, but then took another twenty-two years before embarking on that destination.

Much of the documentation on blacks and institutions of education (informal and formal, day and night and religious) begins around 1860.²⁸¹ Furthermore, most of the research on the education of blacks prior to 1900 focuses on schools that were organized in the South and/or schools created by benevolent whites for the education of Negro children. E. Curtis Alexander wrote that the A.M.E. Church, through Richard Allen, opened the first school for Africans by Africans in 1795 at the Bethel Church.²⁸² However, in his autobiography, Payne contends that any efforts to create and organize schools by people affiliated with the A.M.E. Church were not “established by any organized effort on the part of the denomination. They were the results of individual

²⁸⁰ Ibid., “Chapter VII: Extinction of the Church in South Carolina,” 45.

²⁸¹ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*.

²⁸² E. Curtis Alexander, *Richard Allen: The First Exemplar of African American Education* (New York: ECA Associates, 1985), 100.

effort. These individuals were moved by the Spirit of God to do what they could to impart knowledge to the rising generations.”²⁸³ Payne goes on to mention the creation of four schools, but neglects to mention the day school established by Allen.

The first of these secular schools was commenced by Rev. Daniel Coker in the basement of Bethel Church, Saratoga Street, Baltimore, Md., in 1810. It was a school for the instruction of children and youths in the elementary branches of an English education. He was succeeded in his useful and elevating work by Mr. Cooley. This school, like that of Mr. Coker’s, must have been primary. . . . a maiden lady named Miss Mary Prout kept a school for primary instruction in Rubourgh. This was the third as far as I can learn. She was a prominent member of Bethel. . . . The fourth school was opened by myself in Philadelphia, not as a minister of the A.M.E. Church. . . . My school was in its character equal to what is now regarded as a grammar school. . . . The first organized effort of a denominational character on the part of the Church was made by the Ohio Annual Conference in 1845 [Union Seminary and Farm].²⁸⁴

Thus, according to Payne, the Church’s first historian, the first institution of education established by the A.M.E. Church, rather than by individuals within the Church, was Union Seminary and Farm on December 1, 1847.

It was opened in the basement of our chapel in Columbus, Ohio. Rev. J.M. Brown was its first principal, and he was assisted by Miss Francis Watkins; but it was not a success. Much time was spent in collecting funds to buy the land. . . .It lingered on in a miserable condition until Wilberforce University became the property of the Church. . . .²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Payne, *Recollections*, 223.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 224-225. The school in the basement of Bethel Church in Baltimore is significant for a couple of reasons. One, Daniel Coker was the most educated and literate of all the Church founders. He had previously been a schoolmaster in Baltimore. Second, there is a dispute, albeit almost null and void, as to whether the first A.M.E. Church was organized in Baltimore or in Philadelphia, the latter being the accepted founding congregation of African Methodism in the United States.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 225.

Union Seminary holds the distinction of being the first school founded by blacks in the United States.²⁸⁶ There are few details about the purchase of the land on which Union Seminary was erected. A committee appointed by the Ohio Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church consisting of three men identified as M.T. Newsome, Lewis Adams, and Thos, Lawrence submitted a report in which a statement reads that “172 acres of land, which can be purchased for \$17,200.00, to be paid for in installments” was selected as the location for Union Seminary.²⁸⁷ After the purchase of Wilberforce plans were made to sell this property which was located twelve miles west of Columbus. The Wilberforce University property was originally bought by the M.E. Church for between \$40,000 and \$45,000. They were willing to sell it to the A.M.E. Church for \$10,000. There was about \$4,000 worth of repairs that needed to be made. At a meeting of the Cincinnati Conference of the M.E. Church, on behalf of the A.M.E. Church, Daniel Payne agreed to the following:

- 1st Let the sum of \$14,000 be divided into seven equal shares.
- 2nd Let each annual Conference buy one of these shares and pledge itself to pay for it within two years from the 10th of last March – i.e. March, 1863.
- 3rd Let each Conference pledge itself to pay one thousand dollars within one year from the 10th of last March, and the other thousand within two years from said date.
- 4th Let the fulfillment of these pledges entitle the Annual Conference to equal ownership and equal government in the property and college of Wilberforce.
- 5th Let the ownership and government be effected by the election of an equal number of Trustees in behalf of each Annual Conference: provided that the above number of trustees elected be not more than 35 or less

²⁸⁶ The initial constitution of Union Seminary (Appendix E) will be discussed later in this chapter.

²⁸⁷ B.W. Arnett and S. T. Mitchell, *The Wilberforce Alumna: A Comprehensive Review of the Origin, Development, and Present Status of Wilberforce University* (Xenia, Ohio: Printed at the Gazette Office, 1885), 4.

than 21, and the representative of each Annual Conference be not less than three nor more than five. Provided, also, that one-third or two-fifths of these be laymen.²⁸⁸

The school (Union Seminary) was merged with Wilberforce University in 1863 after its purchase from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Wilberforce, established in 1856 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and then bought by Daniel Payne on behalf of the A.M.E. Church, is the first college started by the A.M.E. Church and the second college created for and by Negroes in the United States.²⁸⁹ Some of the confusion in distinguishing the first college established for and by Negroes, may lay in the fact that Wilberforce in its “first and original form . . . was managed almost entirely by white persons.”²⁹⁰ Also, prior to the A.M.E. Church buying the institution from the M.E. Church, the predominantly white denomination made several attempts to engage the Negroes in an educational partnership. In 1854 The A.M.E. ministers refused on the grounds that the offer smacked of patronization and colonization.²⁹¹ Payne describes the discussion and it is clear that he does not agree with the tone of the conversation nor the final decision:

Rev. M.M. Clark said, in effect, that the M.E. Church was pro-slavery and colonizationist to the backbone; that it must be the colored man’s enemy; that “we suspect the people who have been opposing and oppressing us for more than two hundred years;” that the Anglo-Saxon was treacherous, and given to breaking compromises; that he was historically known to be the

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 6-7.

²⁸⁹ Two sources confirm Wilberforce as the first college established for and by blacks, whereas two other sources confirm it as the second and state that Lincoln University was the first. Because the college was initially created by the predominantly white Methodist Episcopal Church and then bought by the A.M.E. Church, for purposes of this dissertation, Wilberforce will be considered the second college created by and for blacks, but the first to be created by a historically black religious denomination.

²⁹⁰ Payne, *Recollections*, 226.

²⁹¹ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 357.

oppressor of the weak, the despair of the poor and ignorant, especially of the black man; that colored men were too credulous; that in fact, the General Conference must be slow to close with any overture – “especially from men avowedly colonizationists – another term for expatriation;” so, under such fallacious reasoning, the brethren, honest in opinions and meaning well, suffered their prejudices against the scheme of African colonization to induce them to reject one of the most benevolent plans ever devised by man for the elevation of a down-trodden people. The members did not see that, as education be an irresistible power, he who put it into our hands would prove one of our best friends, for he would develop the inherent force within us, which, acting like the upheaval of an earthquake, must lay in the dust him who had planted his feet upon our once prostrate bodies.²⁹²

Thus, were it not for Payne’s involvement the A.M.E. Church may have never taken over Wilberforce University.

Nevertheless, long before the purchase of Wilberforce, the education of blacks was on the mind and mouths of several A.M.E. clergy and lay people. As was evidenced in chapter two, Allen was a proponent of education. Even though some evidence exists that Allen created a school at Bethel in Philadelphia in 1795, it was not until after his death that the Church actually passed resolutions to support education. Allen’s efforts towards promoting education and his contributions of establishing a school are often forgotten, perhaps because his manner and style were quiet, humble, and dignified.

Daniel Payne, one of the boldest, loudest, and sometimes controversial proponents of education within the A.M.E. Church, is most often credited with catapulting the Church into the educational arena. Payne had been forewarned in 1837, by a family friend, that the A.M.E. Church did not support education. Congregants opposed educated preachers and would encourage preachers with shouts of “Amen!” and “Glory to God!” when they boasted about having not “rubbed their heads against college-

²⁹² Ibid., 357.

walls.” At that time, this information caused Payne to associate himself with the Lutheran Church.²⁹³ In 1841, Payne presented a “course of studies for the education of the ministry.”²⁹⁴ The course of studies was broad in scope and would not be more specifically defined until 1844:

It was first resolved, that the elders and deacons of the Connection make use of all the means in our power from henceforth to cultivate our minds and increase our store of knowledge. Then, second, that we recommend to all our elders and deacons, licensed preachers and exhorters, the diligent and indefatigable study of the following branches of useful knowledge: English Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Rollin’s Ancient History, Modern History, Ecclesiastical History, Natural and Revealed Theology.²⁹⁵

This was the Church’s first effort to put forth a course of study for the education of ministers that had been discussed so much at previous gatherings. Payne wrote “These resolutions, presented. . . .were the first strong, entering wedges to rive the mass of general ignorance and force the ministry of our Church to a higher plane of intellectual culture.”²⁹⁶ Payne goes on to detail the A.M.E. Church’s involvement in education up to that time – three common schools, six Sunday-schools, four temperance societies, and one seminary in Philadelphia.²⁹⁷

²⁹³ Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 64.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 141.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁶ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 142.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* Common schools and Sunday schools are described and defined in chapter two. The Temperance Movement was a social movement against the use of alcohol. The Methodist Episcopal Church had a Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals. While it is not clear that the A.M.E. Church had such a board, given Payne’s close connection to the M.E. Church it is not too farfetched to conclude that he subscribed to the curriculum on temperance introduced by the M.E. Church and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union into schools and colleges. Further, temperance

At the Baltimore Conference in 1837, there were a set of resolutions passed that addressed the requirements and comportment of ministers. One of the resolutions labeled “Education” read:

Resolved, That as education is the only sure means of creating in the mind those noble feelings which prompt us to the practice of piety, virtue and temperance, and elevate us above the condition of brutes by assimilating us to the image of our Maker; we, therefore, recommend all our preachers to enjoin undeviating attention to its promotion, and earnestly request all our people to neglect no opportunity of advancing it, pledging ourselves to assist them so far as it is in our power.²⁹⁸

Even though Payne’s 1844 resolution was not the first mention at an A.M.E. Conference about education, the resolution created much debate, including the threat of ministers who would leave the Church and start their own denomination if the resolution was not passed. It took two days of heated debate before it was accepted and passed.²⁹⁹ The remarks of the opponents of education and the supportive resolutions are not printed in the A.M.E. history or in Payne’s autobiography. The Reverend George Hogarth captured the emotional atmosphere created by the proponents and opponents of education during

was part of the rhetoric of racial uplift, self-determination, and moral reform for the Negro race, spoken often at the Negro conventions and at A.M.E. General Conferences. At the 1837 Baltimore conference there was a resolution passed on temperance, “*Resolved*, That our elders and preachers, in their labors to promote the cause of temperance, hold up the principle of total abstinence from the use of beverages of all intoxicating drinks as the true and safe rule for all consistent friends of temperance to go by, and as in accordance with our Discipline and the resolutions of our former conferences,” Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 115-116. See also Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. *Exodus! Religion, Race, and Nation in Early Nineteenth-Century Black America* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 120-121; and August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1963), 6-9, 58, and 70.

²⁹⁸ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 115.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 169.

the conference and challenged the dissenters to voice their discontent and create a better solution:

Much as is said for and against the steps taken by our brother [Payne] in his epistles for the improvement of the ministry, no one has as yet come forward with his pen to propose anything better. Great fear is entertained by some that if the measures proposed by him are adopted by the General Conference, discord and dissolution will necessarily take place in the Church between the ignorant and intelligent portions of it; yet these very brethren who manifest such fear will not come forward and propose anything as a substitute to the measure offered by our brother. They admit themselves to be friendly to education, to an intelligent ministry, and an intelligent congregation; yet they appear to be backward about coming forward with their objections and views on the subject, that we may print them so as, if they are better, to counteract those already offered.³⁰⁰

In 1843, still newly associated with the A.M.E. Church, inspired by his continued confrontation with discrimination, Payne wrote and published his thoughts on ministerial education – the five “Epistles on the Education of the Ministry.” The epistles are not published nor could I find any of the text except for the last essay which was attached to these epistles – “Essay on the Education of the Ministry,” in which Payne appealed to the Connection to not just approve an educational plan for ministers, but to act upon it.³⁰¹ It was said by some A.M.E. ministers that Payne’s work was marked as “full of absurdities.” He was charged with “reckless slander on the general character of the Connection,” and “branding the ministry with infamy.”³⁰² Yet no one answered Rev.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 163.

³⁰¹ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 195. Full text of this speech is in Appendix C.

³⁰² Ibid., 76. Payne also wrote a series of essays on the “Education of the Ministry.” One of these essays is documented in the Church’s history book and is found in this dissertation as Appendix C.

Hogarth's challenge and presented a different solution or argument against Payne's plan for educating the ministry.

It was clear that the A.M.E. Church had mixed support for the institution of formal schooling. Bishop Morris Brown (who was illiterate) supported Payne and promptly appointed him as chairman of the newly created Committee on Education "whose duty it was to select a proper course of studies to be pursued by young preachers in the future."³⁰³ Payne wrote in his biography that the course of study "embraced two sections – one for exhorters, covering two years; and one for preachers,³⁰⁴ covering four years."³⁰⁵ In 1844 the following course of study was laid out as such:

I. For exhorters – First year – the Bible, Smith's English Grammar, Mitchell's Geography, our own Discipline, Wesley's Notes. Second year – Original Church of Christ, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Watson's Life of Wesley. II. For preachers – First year – Smith's English Grammar, Mitchell's Geography, Paley's Evidences of Divine Revelation, History of the Bible, Homes' Introduction (abridged). Second year – Schmucker's Popular Theology, Schmucker's Mental Philosophy, Natural

³⁰³ Ibid., 77

³⁰⁴ In the Methodist tradition there is a distinction, albeit slight distinction between preachers and exhorters, also known as lay preachers. Lay preachers primarily preach at revivals and camp meetings and usually do not stick to Biblical text. The distinction dates back to when John Wesley was establishing the Methodist societies in England. Wesley's creation of a lay preacher was an example of the tension between the Church of England and the Methodist societies. "Convinced that preacher-evangelist was a different order of ministry than pastor-priest, and that the former could be filled by competent lay people, Wesley began to employ "assistants" who were directly responsible to him in order to further the Methodist revival....Lay people could qualify for this largely administrative role by evidencing a close walk with God, by understanding and loving discipline, and 'By loving the Church of England, and resolving not to separate from it'By employing lay ministers who were allowed to preach, but who were not permitted to administer the sacraments, John Wesley believed that the Methodist movement remained well within the ecclesiastical setting of the Church of England." Kenneth J. Collins, *A Faithful Witness: John Wesley's Homiletical Theology* (Wilmore, Kentucky: Wesley Heritage Press, 1993), 100-101.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

Theology, or Watson's Institutes. Third year – Ecclesiastical History, Goodrich's Church History, Porter's Homiletics and DiAubigne's History of Reformation. Fourth year – Geography and Chronology of the Bible, with a review of the above studies.³⁰⁶

The course of study was placed as an appendix to the Church's *Doctrine of Discipline*.

Inspired by a course of study for ministers, in 1845 at the Baltimore Annual Conference the first educational convention was called in order to discuss ways to promote education among the Negro race, to educate young men for the ministry, and to "enter into ways and means to found an institution of learning in the West."³⁰⁷

Whereas, the sacred cause of education is of such vital importance to the interests of the Church in particular and to the world in general, that instead of being contented with what little we have done, we feel it our duty to make new and greater efforts to advance its cause among us in such a way as will result in a general diffusion of its blessings among our benighted race; therefore, *Resolved*, that this committee shall be composed of seven members of our Church, viz: four itinerant preachers and three of the laity. *Resolved*, that a copy of this preamble and these resolutions be sent to each Annual Conference for their adoption.³⁰⁸

The resolution was signed by Payne, Henry Turner, Thomas Henry, Adam Driver, James Shorter, John Henson, and Daniel Moore. Payne reports that the major activities of this convention were the founding of Union Seminary and a primary school in Columbus, Ohio.

Payne took any opportunity he could to espouse his support for education and to advocate for the A.M.E. Church's involvement in creating institutions of education. In 1852, at the Church's general conference, Payne was elected as a Bishop. On the third day of that conference Rev. Charles Avery, founder of Avery College in Allegheny,

³⁰⁶ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 169-170.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 397-398.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 397.

Pennsylvania addressed the conference. His remarks included a promotion for Avery Institute as a “place of learning for the colored youth of this country; that a complete course of education could be obtained there.”³⁰⁹ Avery encouraged the ministers present at the conference to educate their children in part because it is “our only hope of future elevation under God depended upon this.”³¹⁰ Payne seized this opportunity to reply to Avery’s comments by offering a story from his childhood which led him to pursue education.

When a mere youth in my native city, Charleston, S.C., a wealthy planter from the state of North Carolina, who was passing through that city on his way to New Orleans. . . . desired to obtain an intelligent, free young man for his body servant. Application being made to me, through the agency of my guardian, I called at the Planter’s hotel to see him. There he endeavored to persuade me to travel with him, and among the inducements which he piled to my mind was the following statement: Said he, “Daniel, do you know what makes the master and servant? Nothing but superior knowledge – nothing but one man knowing more than another. Now, if you will go with me, the knowledge you may acquire will be of more value to you than three hundred dollars” – the amount of the salary promised by him. Immediately I seized the idea. Instead of going to travel as his servant, I went and chained my mind down to the study of science and philosophy, that I might obtain that knowledge which makes the master.³¹¹

Payne went on (half responding to Avery and half imploring to the A.M.E. congregants):

Let every minister, therefore among us educate himself! Let every mother and father educate their sons and daughters. Then, as water rises to its

³⁰⁹ Daniel A. Payne, *Sermons and Addresses: 1853-1891* (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 276. This compilation of sermons and speeches was originally created by Payne as part of his autobiographical legacy and eventually edited and put together in book format by Charles Killian. Most, but not all, of these speeches and sermons can be found in the Church’s records of annual conferences.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 276-277.

natural level, so will we rise to the position destined by reason and heaven. This is also the advice of our real white friends both North and South.³¹²

Bishops were (and are) the chief officers of the A.M.E. Church and now that Payne was an elected bishop he would likely have more leverage to speak freely and to have his words accepted as credible among the ministers and other bishops of the A.M.E. Church. He would carry the torch of education up until and through the founding of Wilberforce.

In 1855, at the annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Payne learned of the Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church's plans to "consider the practicability of establishing an institution of learning in which colored children and youths could be trained for the different fields of usefulness among colored people, and by which their general elevation be promoted."³¹³ The M.E. Church also desired to "secure the co-operation of the A.M.E. Church, assigning as a reason the fact that it was the largest and most influential body of colored Christians in the land."³¹⁴ Without consulting any other member of his church, Payne thought to himself and then said out loud that the A.M.E. Church would be willing to cooperate on such a venture. When Payne presented the proposal at the A.M.E. general conference of 1856, it was vehemently opposed on the grounds that it was a "colonization scheme to expatriate the colored people and send them to Africa."³¹⁵

³¹² *Ibid.*, 277.

³¹³ Payne, *Recollections*, 130.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 132. I showed in chapter two how Richard Allen wrote against colonization. It was an issue often debated within the Church walls.

Payne's contributions to the A.M.E. Church's pursuit of education are invaluable. I will now explore some more of his publications as a foundation for the creation of the Church's mission and philosophy on education.³¹⁶

Payne's Personal Pursuit of Education for the A.M.E. Church

It may be unfair and inaccurate to state that within the A.M.E. Daniel Payne was the lone vocal proponent of education. However, looking at the bishops who were alive and served when Payne was alive and served, he is the only one who consistently gave speeches which included espousing the importance of education and who published his thoughts on the need for an educated ministry.³¹⁷ In comparing the English Methodist Churches started by John and Charles Wesley to the African Methodist churches in America, Payne wrote:

English Methodism began its career with founding a school of learning for the sons of its preachers, and one for the children of poor colliers. Subsequently other institutions for higher education were originated. So also did American Methodism commence its career with planning and executing in behalf of education. . . .because Allen and his coadjutors were illiterate men, they founded no institution of learning, and there is no trace of a thought in their minds about a schools of learning.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ These documents will include *Treatise on Domestic Education, Sermons delivered by Bishop Daniel Payne before the General Conference of the AME Church*, and articles written in the *Christian Recorder* and the *Repository of Religion and Literature, and of Science and Art*.

³¹⁷ When Daniel Payne joined the A.M.E. Church there were but three Bishops – Richard Allen, Morris Brown, and Edward Waters (all of whom have an A.M.E. college named for them). Payne wrote that of the sixteen men who organized the A.M.E. Church Daniel Coker, a schoolmaster in the city of Baltimore, was the most intelligent. Payne, *History of A.M.E. Church*, 393.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 394.

This stance I think made Payne less popular than some of the other bishops, but at the same time propelled the A.M.E. Church to the position of leadership among Negro denominations in the field of education.³¹⁹

There are two consistent themes in Payne's support of education: (1) parents should ensure that their children receive an education and (2) A.M.E. ministers should be educated. Both of these themes seem to make common sense to the twenty-first century reader, but putting Payne's ideas in context is important. The majority of Negro clergy in the 1800s were not literate and many of those who could read had not had any type or minimal formal schooling. This of course is due to the oppressive restrictive nature of slavery into which many of these ministers had been born, and due to the fact that there were not many schools available which Negroes could attend. Furthermore, one of the prevailing thoughts among Negro preachers was that ministers preached and led their congregations under the voice and guidance of God; formal education was not compatible with or in some views, interfered with God's natural calling.³²⁰ This came up often during annual conference meetings and Daniel Payne found himself explaining why it was beneficial for ministers to receive formal education. During his first annual address as bishop to the Philadelphia annual conference Payne spoke about one of his themes:

³¹⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 52-53 and Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 240.

³²⁰ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 155-156. During the Baltimore Conference of 1843 three men were being brought before the Connection for ordination. After much debate about their qualifications all three were disqualified. One of the reasons given was "because they had not the information required by the Discipline." In objection to this one minister rose and demanded "whether we wanted a man to know to read Hebrew, Greek, and Latin before we would ordain him....In the speech that followed, education and those who favored it were denounced." There are no details of the speech given at that conference denouncing education, just this description given by Payne as the recorder of the Church history.

Touching this important subject, most affectionately do I offer the following advice and reflections. Let those who have not passed through the studies prescribed in discipline commence them at once, and cease not until they shall have been mastered. Let those who have passed this course ascend to the higher studies. Let them study Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The Latin will not only introduce you to the learning of ancient Rome, but also make you radically familiar with your own vernacular. The Hebrew will make you acquainted with that laconic, that poetic language with Moses and the prophets wrote and sung. The Greek will make you master of that copious tongue in which Christ and the Apostles taught and preached. The study of the grammatical structure *alone*, will give the mind a *clearness of conception, and a power of analysis*, which no other study can confer, excepting Mathematics. Try this course for one year, and so sweet, so abundant will be the fruits, that I doubt if you will cease studying so long as you live. “The Christian dwells, like Uriel, in the sun.” If, indeed, the private Christian dwells there, where then, should be the abiding-place of a minister of Jesus? I answer, in the purer and brighter light of which the sun himself is but a shadow. Even the light of truth, from which all ignorance is expelled. This light is the Bible. And O, what an amount of learning, knowledge, and wisdom is required to unlock the mysteries, evolve the transcendent beauties, and appropriate the inexhaustible riches of that wondrous book, to the intellectual, moral, and religious wants of a benighted, wicked idolatrous world! Permit me humbly to add, that sanctified knowledge is a power at once beneficent, glorious, and tremendous. It is beneficent because it is always delighted in good works, and conferring blessings upon mankind – it is glorious, because it shines forth with the brightness of the unclouded sun; - it is tremendous because the man in whom it dwells is like an angel of God, armed with thunderbolts crushing the strongholds of the empire of Satan.³²¹

Payne’s words to the ministry regarding education were usually couched in Biblical references so that his thoughts could be easily connected to the minister’s duty as a steward of the word of God and a saver of souls. In addressing ministers and bishops Payne never admonished those who were not educated or mandated that all Church leaders should be educated. He advised and shared his reflections and gave Biblical

³²¹ Daniel Payne, “First Annual Address to the Philadelphia Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church,” May 16, 1853. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Prior to 1853 the entire A.M.E. Church met for one annual conference. Beginning in 1853 the Church was broken up into districts.

context for the benefits of education. Anything more forceful may have caused resistance, especially from those ministers and bishops who were not educated. In his sermon delivered at the 1852 General Conference Payne discussed the “work of the Christian minister as a preacher,” and as someone who governs the Church.³²²

Sufficiency is not to be found in man, but in God. . . .Yes; our sufficiency is of God! But how is this sufficiency to be obtained? Is man a mere passive being in the matter; or does God require some action on his part? We answer, in this respect man is not like a seed placed in the ground, which can be developed by the morning and evening dews, together with the native warmth of the earth and the sunbeams. He must use the mind that God has given him; he must cultivate this mind, and seek that aid which is given to everyone who he has called to the work of the ministry. First, then, let him cultivate his mind by all means in his power. With the light of sciences, philosophy and literature, let him illumine his understanding, and carry this culture and this illumination to the highest point possible. Secondly, let him seek the unction from above, the baptism of the Holy Ghost; let him live the life of faith and prayer, for such was our Lord and Master Jesus Christ the Righteous – his head was all knowledge and his heart all holiness. He was as free from ignorance as he was from sin. God grant us that we may all seek to be like him as much in the one case as in the other. . . .Now, it is for teaching sentiments like these that I have been slandered, persecuted and hated. This has been the head and front of my offending. But brethren, am I not right? Is it not proper I should seek the improvement of those who had not the chance of an early education? Yes; I have done it, and still will seek the improvement of my young brethren, that they may be both intelligent, well educated and holy men....³²³

Payne truly took almost every opportunity offered him to speak to share his thoughts about education. At the New England conference, the newest district in the Connection, Bishop Payne delivered similar words to the ones at the Baltimore conference, to “educate ourselves by the light of science and philosophy.”³²⁴

³²² Payne, *The History of the A.M.E. Church*, 268-271.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 270-271.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 286.

Even when not speaking before or writing to an A.M.E. audience Payne passionately espoused his views on the importance of education. In this piece submitted to the *Anglo-African Magazine* Payne stated,

Knowledge is more to be desired, and really more valuable than gold. Until knowledge illuminated the understanding of man, gold lay hidden in the mountain ravine, the rugged quartz and granite, or mingled with the river's sand. Knowledge drew it forth from all these hiding places – shifting it from the sand – picking it from the ravines or wresting it from the embrace of the granite or quartz; she converted it into circulating mediums, curious instruments, and beautiful vessels to meet the wants, the luxuries and purposes of civilized and Christian life. Indeed, all the treasures of nature; varied in their forms, and colors as they are; countless in their number as they may be; are nothing more nor less, than materials out of which knowledge manufactures the comforts and luxuries, for which human hearts are daily sighing, and human desires daily seeking; making and marking the distinctions between savage and civilized man as broad, clear and evident as that which separates the night from the day. Give your child gold without knowledge, and this will be the self-evident proof that you wish to curse him. Give him *first of all*, that *knowledge* which will *qualify* him to make a *right, proper and beneficent* use of gold, or give him no gold at all.³²⁵

Payne was musing about how much more valuable knowledge is than gold and encourages parents to provide their children with an education versus giving them gold. This essay, “Fragments of Thought,” was published in 1859 just three years after the A.M.E. Church purchased Wilberforce University.

The same year in which Payne's “Fragment of Thought” was published, the Historical and Literary Societies of the Missouri and Indiana conferences requested that he write and publish his thoughts on the Christian Ministry. His thoughts were written and published in the *Repository of Religion and Literature*. In this discourse he likens ministers to professors and writes his thoughts on the moral and intellectual character of

³²⁵ Daniel A. Payne, “Fragments of Thought – Nos. 1 and 2,” *The Anglo-African Magazine*, 1859. This is the only issue published of this journal of which Thomas Hamilton was editor.

such men, the latter of which is the interest of this dissertation and particular chapter section.

The teachers of mankind are manifold. There are the teachers of Law and of Medicine; of Mathematics and of Language; of Natural Philosophy, Intellectual Philosophy, and Moral Philosophy; of Chemistry and Botany; of Zoology, Mineralogy, and Geology; of History – Natural, Profane, and Ecclesiastical; of Music and of Painting. All these are useful to mankind, and without them, the world might ultimately be reduced to barbarism. These are either self-constituted or appointed by men, and responsible to men alone for the manner in which they discharge their duties and obligations – they are called Professors. But the teachers of religion, of its highest form, Christianity, are heaven-called, heaven-appointed, heaven-ordained. They are called *Ministers*, and responsible *first* to God; *secondarily* to Man. It is our intention to consider the character of these latter, morally and intellectually.³²⁶

In each of his essays, sermons, and conference addresses Payne discussed a wide range of topics regarding theological, classical, and modern curriculum. The range I believe is sophisticated and extensive for a Black man of his background and living in the era in which he lived. Payne supported a specific course of study for ministerial education. Thelin describes the period between 1785 and 1860 as a period of growth, expansion, and the creation of curriculum that characterized the diversity of American higher education,” and that were “innovative in their own time.”³²⁷ This growth, expansion, and diverse and innovative curriculum included programs for the ministry. Beginning with the ministerial course of study introduced at the 1844 Annual Conference, Payne paints a picture of a liberal arts education by touting the importance of learning the Bible and Biblical history (theological curriculum) along with grammar and geography (modern curriculum) and

³²⁶ Daniel A. Payne, “The Christian Ministry: It’s Moral and Intellectual Character,” *Repository of Religion and Literature* 2 (1859).

³²⁷ John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 52-53 and 60-61.

philosophy (classical curriculum). This range of curricula offerings is clearly evidenced in 1866-1872 when Wilberforce University was under the leadership of Payne. After the fire of 1865, the Theological and Classical Departments were opened in 1866, Scientific Department is opened in 1867, and the Normal Department is opened in 1872.³²⁸ Even with his belief in and support of a curriculum that included sciences, languages, and philosophy, Payne still wanted to emphasize the important characteristics of a minister.

In his article, Payne outlined what he believed to be the ideal moral characteristics of a minister. He read this article before the A.M.E. conferences in Indiana, Missouri, and Baltimore, so he undoubtedly was addressing the moral and intellectual characteristics of A.M.E. ministers and bishops. After he thoroughly described the moral character of the minister, Payne then addressed the intellectual character of the minister. He detailed six points which should be part of a minister's intellectual character, but before he described those six qualities he stated that the Christian minister

... shall be able to teach others. There are those who mistake the *desire* to be useful for the *ability*. Now desire and ability are two distinct and independent things. Some men, through mere desire, rush into the ministry without any qualifications. They remind me of some lunatics, who fancy themselves to be kings or angels, and try to act accordingly... some men imagine themselves called to the work of the ministry, and desirous to engage in it, obtain recommendation from the class, license from the quarterly, and authority from the annual conference, set out booted, spurred and mounted, to do what? I ask again, to do what? You say to preach the Gospel. What Gospel? The Gospel of Christ? Well, do they? No! They preach what is in no Bible under heaven... it has come to pass that some bearing the name of ministers, can be tipplers and drunkards; others can have two living wives, while some laymen can have four, and yet maintain their standing in the pulpit and in the church. For this purpose I say to you, my dear brethren, if the classes and quarterly conferences will let such men deceive them – don't you be deceived by them – let not the Annual Conference be duped. Nay, let us examine the qualifications of

³²⁸ Payne, *The History of the A.M.E. Church*, 429-431. The curricular offerings of Wilberforce will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

every man who asks admission into the ranks of the ministry – let us try them by the discipline; yea, or: let us try them by the word of God.³²⁹

Payne was crossing a fine line by criticizing the process by which men become ministers. The process was such that a man expressed his desire to become a minister, the current class of ministers either recommended or did not recommend that man for the ministry, upon recommendation he was issued a license to preach from the quarterly conference and then authorized and sworn in by the annual conference. The process did not necessitate that the man desiring to become a minister attend a theological seminary or obtain some other form of formal training before being licensed. Payne went on to make reference to what “the discipline” states about the qualifications of ministers; he obviously found the process problematic. The *Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* was published in 1817 and is in essence the guide to the history, beliefs, and practices of the church. The discipline, as it is often referred to, provides the structure of the church, the organization of the quarterly and annual conferences, and the qualifications and duties of various church personnel including preachers (or ministers).³³⁰ Specifically as it pertains to men becoming preachers, in section seven, titled “Of the trial of those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach” the discipline states

Quest. How shall we try those who profess to be moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

³²⁹ Payne, “The Christian Ministry.”

³³⁰ *The Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* can be found in electronic format through the University of North Carolina’s “Documenting the American South” project on <http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/ame/ame.html> (first accessed June 2005). The discipline can also be found at most theological libraries. It should also be noted the doctrines and discipline are common among the various branches of the Methodist Church.

Ans. 1. Let them be asked the following questions: Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding, a right judgment in the things of God, a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching?

As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Ghost.³³¹

Payne did not believe this was sufficient proof and his lecture and essay clearly went against the discipline's recommended practice:

Now hear the word: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given by the prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them: that they profiting may appear unto all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." Can it be understood, without perceiving how the Holy Spirit *insists* upon a *proper and diligent exercise* of the intellect, for the purpose of improving it, by a daily, habitual, continuous contact with the *Truth*. . . . That, therefore, a neglect of its culture would lead to disastrous consequences; that the Christian minister has no more liberty to cease from the cultivation of his mind, than the ocean has to cease its motion. So also with the ministers of Jesus. Let them cease to cultivate their minds by the study of the holy truth, then will they retrograde back to the darkness, the superstition, and errors of heathenism, religions becomes a mere cloak of hypocrisy, blasphemy the language of its teachers, and the Church itself. .

. .³³²

³³¹ The African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1817. The sections that followed section seven also pertain to preaching; "Section VIII: Of the matter and manner of preaching, and other public exercises," "Section IX: Of the duty of preachers to God, themselves, and one another," and "Section X: Rules by which we should continue, or desist from preaching at any place."

³³² Payne, "The Christian Ministry."

Here Payne inserts the qualities of intellectual character found in Christian ministers by stating that the Church should only be entrusted to those who “shall be able to teach others” and who have : (a) improvable minds; (b) an unquenchable desire for useful knowledge; (c) application [of the useful knowledge]; (d) correct judgment; (e) a natural aptness to teach others; and (f) humility.³³³ Payne concludes his lecture by setting guidelines for those who would admit men into the ministry:

Whenever a young man comes forward, and tells us that he s called to the ministry, let us examine him rigidly, according to our excellent discipline and the requisitions of God’s word. It is not enough that he tells us God has called him; let him show the evidences of his call. On the Committee of Examination, recommend no man who is not able to teach others. In your Quarterly Conferences, so far as you have power, suffer no man to obtain a license who is not able to teach others. And will you dare vote for a man to obtain ordination, who is not able to teach others? No, never! Let the whole ministry, let the whole Church pray, that the Lord Jesus may give us ministers, full of holiness, wisdom, faithfulness, “Who shall be able to teach others also.”³³⁴

In the Repository of Religion and Literature there is obviously no verbal response for Payne to hear. But opponents of officially making education of ministers a prerequisite could be heard as far back as the A.M.E. General Conference of 1834. The details of that meeting and its outcome are detailed earlier in this chapter.

For many years Payne was the lone loud voice advocating for A.M.E. ministers to be formally educated and for the church to create an institution of higher learning. His persistent speeches and essays with cautious, passionate, and Biblical language appeared to have eventually swayed church leaders to embrace the idea that education was not only important, but also congruent with Christian faith, values, and duty. Once this was

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

agreed upon another philosophical battle waged - what was the purpose of the education offered, what type of education was best, what courses should be offered – a battle familiar to an organization creating institutions of learning. The discussion that follows avoids couching this discussion in the well-known historical pedagogical debate among Negroes – liberal arts education versus manual education (industrial training), but instead traces the development of the A.M.E. Church’s philosophy of education.³³⁵

The Educational Philosophy of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

The function of the Negro College, then, is clear: it must maintain the standards of popular education, it must seek the social regeneration of the Negro, and it must help in the solution of problems of race contact and cooperation. And finally, beyond all this, it must develop men.³³⁶

Creating an educational philosophy is a daunting task. In my first year as a doctoral student I was asked to develop an educational philosophy. The philosophy I created was primarily based upon my notion that individuals pursued a college degree in order to obtain a job that would financially sustain them. My professor proclaimed me to be a sophist!³³⁷ The entire class grappled with this question, reformulated their

³³⁵ To read more about the pedagogical debate concerning Negro education see Linda Buchanan and Philo Hutcheson, “Re-considering the Washington-DuBois Debate: Two Black Colleges in 1910-1911,” in *Southern Education in the 20th Century: Exceptionalism and its Limits*, ed. Wayne Urban (New York: Garland Press, 1999), 77-99; Jacqueline M. Moore, *Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and the Struggle for Racial Uplift* (Lanham, Maryland: S.R. Books/Rowman and Littlefield, 2003); and C. Spence Poxpey, “The Washington-DuBois Controversy and Its Effect on the Negro Problem,” *History of Education Quarterly* 8 (Summer 1957): 128-152.

³³⁶ DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 89-90.

³³⁷ “The Sophist” is one of the Dialogues of Plato, which had been read for this particular course (Philosophy of Education). The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy defines a sophist as “any of a number of ancient Greeks, roughly contemporaneous with Socrates, who professed to teach, for a fee, rhetoric, philosophy, and how to succeed in

philosophies, argued vehemently for their position, changed their minds, and in the end realized that developing an educational philosophy is an ongoing process, and it is not just a set ideal. As time went on I embraced the notion of pursuing education for the sake of knowledge, the exchange among colleagues, the grappling with unanswerable questions, but did not let go of my feeling that the end product of the pursuit of education is usually a fulfilling career, with the side benefit of contributing positively to the uplift of my community (people of African descent). I teach in a professional discipline (Social Work) and that lens often shifts my educational philosophy towards training as opposed to knowledge for its own sake. I do not feel as if I have a singular educational philosophy that guides my research and teaching. My philosophy is often contextualized. My own struggle to formulate a philosophy of education sheds light onto why I have found it difficult to pinpoint the A.M.E. Church's philosophy of education.

In my research thus far, I have yet to find the educational philosophy or educational mission of the A.M.E. Church explicitly documented. The Indiana Conference of the A.M.E. Church initiated a scholarly journal called the *Repository of Religion and Literature, and of Science and Art*, which was only published for three years. The focus of this periodical was educational – ‘to diffuse useful knowledge among

life. They typically were itinerants, visiting much of the Greek world, and gave public exhibitions at Olympia and Delphi. They were part of the general expansion of Greek learning and of the changing culture in which the previous informal educational methods were inadequate. The sophists have been portrayed as intellectual charlatans (hence the pejorative use of “sophism”), teaching their sophistical reasoning for money, and (at the other extreme) as Victorian moralists and educators. The truth is more complex. They were not a school, and shared no body of opinions. They were typically concerned with ethics (unlike many earlier philosophers, who emphasized physical inquiries) and about the relationship between laws and customs (*nomos*) and nature (*phusis*).” Robert Audi, General Editor, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 862-864.

our people – second, to cultivate and develop their moral talents, and elevate their intellectual, moral, and religious character.’³³⁸ The purpose of this journal provides some glimpse into the A.M.E. Church’s view on education. I found issues of the *Repository* periodical at Wilberforce University, Harvard University, and the Indiana State Historical Society, but a complete set of all three years of its publication is not available. Another source of why education was important to the A.M.E. Church can be found in an article written by Sherman Greene, “The Rationale Underlying the Support of Colleges Maintained by the African Methodist Episcopal Church.” In this article Greene wrote about the pursuit of racial uplift, which is discussed extensively in chapter one of this dissertation, as one of the primary reasons why the A.M.E. Church wanted to pursue the establishment of colleges:

The leaders of this newly organized church were not unmindful of the fact that a people so morally weakened in the house of bondage, so illiterate, so degraded, so impoverished, and so lacking in manly stamina were unprepared to assume their rightful places as coordinate factors in the growth, prosperity, and emoluments in this Republic, unless trained by similar means and methods as other race varieties composing the body politic.³³⁹

This article and others like it simply gave racial uplift and self-determination as the reasons for why the A.M.E. Church established colleges. The writers of the articles and other proponents of education within the A.M.E. Church did not specifically state an educational philosophy that would guide their pursuit of higher learning.

³³⁸ As quoted in Stephen Angell and Anthony Pinn, *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1862-1939* (Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000), xxi.

³³⁹ Sherman Greene, “The Rationale Underlying the Support of Colleges Maintained by the African Methodist Episcopal Church,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 29 (Summer 1960): 319.

Thus, it is my intent to construct the Church's educational philosophy based upon what was written in various periodicals by the A.M.E. clergy and laypeople about education and its necessity.³⁴⁰ There are some sermons and other unpublished documents (speeches and letters) that contain glimpses into the Church's views on the necessity of education. The majority of the educational views can be found in the *Christian Recorder* and in the *AME Review*, two of the church's primary publications. The construction of the Church's educational philosophy includes articles written for non-A.M.E. sponsored publications. In particular any thoughts that Richard Allen had on education are found in other periodicals because the *Christian Recorder* and *A.M.E. Review* began publication after his death. The only periodical that is likely to have anything written by Allen would be the *Freedom's Journal*, which began publication in 1827. Further, this construction of the Church's educational philosophy may be lopsided because as has been stated, not all of the A.M.E. clergy were literate. Therefore, the majority of the written opinions expressed came from the literate clergy, an obvious bias in favor of education. From reviewing the articles written in support of higher education, it is also clear that many of the writers had much the same perspective as Payne. There was much written in these two publications about education, and there were advertisements for normal and common and colored schools, but the focus here is on what was written that specifically promoted higher education, especially the philosophical debate.

The A.M.E. Church began publishing books and periodicals when Richard Allen established the Book Concern, which was and is the Church's publishing house. The first A.M.E. periodical was the *African Methodist Episcopal Church Magazine*, edited by

³⁴⁰ Please refer to chapter one for a discussion about the importance of periodicals for the Negro during the time in which these colleges were being established.

George Hogarth beginning in 1835. In 1852, the *Magazine* ceased publication and the Church published a newspaper entitled the *Mystery*, which was renamed the *Christian Herald*, which became the *Christian Recorder*. The *A.M.E. Church Review* appeared in 1884, after the Church had gone almost two decades without publishing a periodical.³⁴¹ Another source of information are the other predominantly black periodicals of the time in order to lend support to the A.M.E. Church's support for the importance of education for Negroes.³⁴² The final source of information for constructing the A.M.E. Church's educational philosophy is the mission and curriculum of the actual colleges established. As has been shared in the introduction chapter of this dissertation, this information is limited for various reasons; therefore the information provided comes primarily from Wilberforce University and Morris Brown College.

To Educate or not to Educate. One of the obstacles presented in constructing the Church's educational philosophy is the fact that various individuals within the Church had different opinions on the necessity for and the purpose of education. In this chapter I have shown how there was resistance to his "Epistles on Education" and how his proposal for a course of studies created such debate to the point of some preachers threatening to "withdraw and organize an ecclesiastical establishment that would be in favor of such a measure."³⁴³ There is further evidence that ministers of the A.M.E.

³⁴¹ Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, xviii-xxii.

³⁴² Little, *Disciples of Liberty*, "The black press provided a mode of communication that allowed African Americans to express self-determination based on their own perceptions, interpretations, and values that were shaped by the unique blend of African heritage and American experiences," 40.

³⁴³ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 169.

Church denounced education. At the Baltimore Conference in 1843, there was great debate over the ordination of two ministers. The point of contention was the education level of these two men. Payne describes the incident as “the first open conflict between the advocates of ministerial education and the defenders of an illiterate ministry.”³⁴⁴ The arguments against the educated ministers are not specifically detailed in the A.M.E. history book nor elsewhere for that matter, but the sentiment was that the educated ministers (those who had earned a college degree) were not as well versed in the doctrines and discipline of the A.M.E. Church as those who preachers who had spent the majority of their formative years learning to proselytize, preach, and care for a congregation; often the argument was about being well-versed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin versus being well-versed in the Bible. These arguments occurred often at annual conference meetings.³⁴⁵ In the end Bishop Morris Brown, who was always a proponent of education, gave a speech that resulted in the conference adopting resolutions on education similar to the ones adopted at the Philadelphia Conference. The whole text of the speech is not given in the *History of the A.M.E. Church* book, but Payne paraphrased Brown’s words in that Brown was clear he would not ordain (or send out) any minister that was not qualified (meaning not educated). Brown said that

. . . he was placed in the chair [of Bishop] not to carry out the opinions of any man nor set of men, but to execute the Discipline to its very letter. . . . when men are sent out destitute of the needed qualifications the people do not blame the Conference, but the Bishop.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 155.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 156.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 156.

The clearest example of a possible philosophy of education is seen in the preamble and constitution developed in 1845 at the Ohio Conference in relation to the creation of Union Seminary.³⁴⁷ Here is the most detailed written document of what the Church considered to be the appropriate form of education. The description, however, contains elements of a seminary for men, possible primary education for children, and coeducational schooling in a vaguely defined liberal arts and industrial training curriculum. Because the Church was aware of the huge deficit in literacy and educational training for Negro people, the Church was willing to assist Negroes in obtaining the education necessary in order to become literate and educated. This is the first indication that Union Seminary, which later became Wilberforce University, provided education on a continuum which began at the primary level and went on through the collegiate level.³⁴⁸ While the specific nature of course offerings was not clear at that time, what was clear were the values the Church sought to instill.

Not unlike some of the other early denominational colleges, the A.M.E. Church sought to instill morality, piety, and the teachings of Christ into its students. The Church initially sought to train young men for the ministry and young women for teaching, and both as missionaries and Christian workers. In creating institutions of education, the A.M.E. Church also sought to promote racial uplift and self-determination. The prevailing rhetoric of racial uplift was not limited to Negroes and their institutions. The desire or obligation to fulfill a Christian duty to help others and save their souls as well as train future ministers was a sentiment shared by many predominantly white

³⁴⁷ Please see Appendix E of this dissertation for full text.

³⁴⁸ An example of this range of educational offerings will be provided shortly.

denominations who established institutions for blacks.³⁴⁹ In so doing, predominantly white denominations also saw what the A.M.E. Church faced – educating a group of people who had no primary educational background was a challenge. The Presbyterian Church representative (the secretary of the Negro Work Department, Division of Home Missions, Board of Church Extension) wrote the following about its creation of Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama:

Stillman College, originally called Tuscaloosa Institute, was established in 1876, eleven years after the close of the War between the States. Just at the close of the period known as Reconstruction, it was clear that Negroes would not continue indefinitely to worship in the balconies of white Presbyterian churches. They would form their own churches and would need their own ministers. To meet this obvious need for training Negro ministers the General Assembly took action in 1875, which resulted in the establishment of Tuscaloosa Institute. The primary purpose of this school was to train ministers for the Negro Presbyterian churches. While the original purpose for founding the school was to train ministers, it soon became clear that success in the study of theology was directly related to the level of academic training the ministerial student possessed. After trying to cope with the frustrations which both the professors and pupils had experienced because the student possessed very little, if any, formal education, the Church approved an academic program which was preparatory to theological study. We must face the fact that the Presbyterian Church, U.S., supported Stillman College in the same way and with the same motivation it supported a mission to Africa. During the middle period of this development, I think the Church maintained Stillman College because it could help the Negro people best by training them to earn a living.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁹ In 1960, the *Journal of Negro Education* published a special issue on the Negro Church-Related College. All of the denominations represented in that issue, except for the A.M.E. and the A.M.E. Zion Church, were predominantly white. Each denomination wrote about its desire to create institutions of learning for Negroes to help overcome the ill-effects of slavery and to instill Christian values into the former slaves. *Journal of Negro Education*, 29 (Summer 1960): 211-407. See footnote 182 on page 97 for a complete list of authors and article titles.

³⁵⁰ L.W. Bottoms, “The Policies and Rationale Underlying the Support of Negro Colleges and Schools Maintained by the Presbyterian Church in the United States,” *Journal of Negro Education* 29 (Summer 1960): 264-265.

Across denominations, both black and white, the philosophy underlying the reason for creating colleges for Negroes was to train ministers and to help uplift the race by providing them with whatever level of education was needed. As I discussed in chapter two, the curriculum offered spanned from basic reading and writing to college-level courses depending on the previous education of the students. As mentioned in chapter two when discussing racial uplift and self-determination, institutions that were created to educate the Negro in the antebellum era, especially those institutions created by Negro churches, provided whatever type of education was deemed necessary for the improvement of the Negro race – that included theological, classical, modern, college-level, and primary and secondary education.³⁵¹

In 1853, when the Methodist Episcopal Church established an institution of education for Negroes, the church resolved that:

It is of the greatest importance, both to the colored and white races in the free States, that all the colored people should receive at least good common school education; and that for this purpose well-qualified teachers are indispensable; that the religious instruction of the colored people is necessary to their elevation as well as their salvation; that we recommend the establishment of a literary institution of a higher order for the education of the colored people generally, and for the purpose of preparing teachers of all grades to labor in the work of educating the colored people in our country and elsewhere.³⁵²

Not unlike the church from which it ceded in 1787, the A.M.E. Church's philosophy of education was built not only on the rhetoric of salvation and racial uplift, but also on the need to promote self-determination.

³⁵¹ Church and Sedlak, *Education in the United States: An Interpretive History*; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South: 1860-1935*; and Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History*. Also see discussion on pages 87-90.

³⁵² Daniel Payne, "The History of the Origin and Development of Wilberforce University," ca. 1877-1878.

A.M.E. advocates of education sought to distinguish what the Church offered from what the public schools or other denominations might offer. This desire to offer an unique educational experience speaks to the notion of self-determination discussed in chapter one. In one *Christian Recorder* article, Dr. S.W. Fisher wrote:

No, in this land the church must care for the interest of the church. She must found and endow these institutions of learning. . . .Let infidels, if they choose, establish institutions for themselves. . . .³⁵³

Even without a clearly written philosophy of education, it is apparent that the Church had three goals: creating an educated ministry; moral training; and the creation of colleges, which could include industrial training or liberal arts depending on where the college was located, who was attending, and who was advocating for that college. Racial uplift (as has already been discussed) was the overarching purpose for entertaining the idea that Negroes should be educated. Although it is not clear that the church as an organization took a philosophical stance on one particular type of education over another³⁵⁴, there is evidence that different individuals (ministers and laity) within the church supported at

³⁵³ S.W. Fisher, "Responsibility Of The Church For The Character Of The Scientific Education of Our Youth," *Christian Recorder* 7, no. 17 (April 27, 1867): 3.

³⁵⁴ One of the well-known and prevalent debates during the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century in regards to Negro education, was over providing liberal arts curriculum versus industrial training curriculum. This debate is often symbolized through the words of Booker T. Washington versus W.E.B. Du Bois. While many scholars argue that the debate is over-simplified and not as clearly divided as it may appear on the surface, there was often discussion within institutions about which was the better curriculum to offer. In the mid-1900s in the different A.M.E. journals, different authors expressed their opinion about preferring one curriculum over the other. Examples of some of these articles include: "Moral Training of the Young," *Christian Recorder*, 2 March 1861; "Industrial Education the Need of our Youth," *The A.M.E. Review*, July 1888; and "Education Proper," *The A.M.E. Review*, July 1889. It is not clear however, that in the mid-1800s when the A.M.E. Church was establishing its colleges that this debate over liberal arts versus industrial training was a matter of concern. In fact, I will show that the early college curriculum was a mix of both.

least one of the above mentioned goals. Sometimes the goals overlapped and other times individuals supported only one form of education over all the others. I will first give a general overview of how education was presented in one of the Church's primary publications and how many of the editorials in the *Christian Recorder* set the stage for the development of the Church's educational goals. Then I will present and discuss the rhetoric of the goals of educating ministers, providing moral training, and providing a college curriculum. Finally, I will present and discuss some aspects of the earliest curriculum provided at Wilberforce University and Morris Brown College.

The *Christian Recorder*. The *Christian Recorder*³⁵⁵ (the *Recorder*) is one place in which the Church responded to the socio-political debates and where proponents of education were given the opportunity to express their desires and to promote the benefits of education. Jabez Pitt Campbell was appointed editor of the *Recorder* in 1856, serving

³⁵⁵ In the United States, *The Christian Recorder* is the oldest surviving periodical published by people of color, meaning that out of the different journals that were created in the 1800s, the *Recorder* is the oldest one that is still being published today. The publication began as the *African Methodist Episcopal Church Magazine*, with the first issue appearing in September 1841. Originally intended as a monthly magazine, only twelve issues were printed in its first three-and-a-half years of existence. In 1852, the magazine ceased publication, due primarily to lack of adequate financial support. The church purchased a newspaper entitled *Mystery* and renamed it the *Christian Herald*. In 1852, the name was changed to the *Christian Recorder*. It should also be noted that the publication was not always printed on time, there were lapses in publications, and currently the first volume available on microfilm begins in the year 1861. The tragedy of the loss of several years of publication is that the *Christian Recorder*, similar to *Freedom's Journal* (the first African American periodical) and *The North Star* (edited by Frederick Douglass), provided an "outline for debate and exchange, a way of measuring social conditions and humanizing life that spoke to abolition and other pressing issues for the African American community." These papers collected information from churches, lodges, letters, and meetings and conferences. Despite racism, threats and other obstacles, the articles were often candid and gave blacks a media outlet to share their voice and opinion on the events of the times that affected them. Angell and Pinn, *Social Protest Thought in the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, xvi-xxi.

as the publication's third editor.³⁵⁶ Campbell, like other editors, ministers, and bishops, used the newspaper to promote his support for education. Campbell often used scripture and the underlying desire to practice moral deeds and follow God's teachings as reasons for why education was important. Lawrence Little describes how editors and other contributors to church-affiliated periodicals walked a tight-rope between what some considered radical ideas and practical actions in promoting education.

Rhetoric not only had to persuade and inform but also had to impress....Leaders within the A.M.E. Church spiced their prose with flowery, classical language that demonstrated knowledge of the Bible, Shakespeare, the Classics....A.M.E. leaders had to choose language that would be acceptable to the widest possible audience, especially those who could affect a change.³⁵⁷

Presenting education as a Christian duty, as a way of fulfilling God's plan, in 1855

Campbell wrote:

Again, the moral wants and necessities of men require that they should be educated. True morality has no spontaneous growth in the garden of corrupted nature. Her seeds are exotic to this garden. They may be sown here; but before this can be successfully done, education must do her appropriate work. ... It is not only true of morals, that men want, and have need of education, but it is equally true in all matters pertaining to religion. Without instruction, who can know the existence of the relationship, which exists between himself and the Creator, as well as the obligations we are under to him? What, without education, do we know of

³⁵⁶ Along with being editor of the *Christian Recorder*, Jabez Pitt Campbell served as the eighth bishop of the A.M.E. Church. He served as bishop for twenty-seven years. He was the first bishop to visit California and subsequently organized the Western conference at Sacramento in 1865. He was also the first bishop to visit Haiti and organized that conference in May of 1887. Born in Delaware in 1815 and sold into servitude by his father to pay a debt, Campbell bought his freedom at the age of eighteen. Five years later he preached his first sermon at Bethany A.M.E. Church in Holmesburg, PA. Campbell College, which was located in Jackson, Mississippi, was named after him along with several churches in seven different states. Richard R. Wright, Jr., *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (The A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1963), 123-126.

³⁵⁷ Little, *Disciples of Liberty*, 37-38.

our fallen nature and its causes or the remedy appointed of God for it? ... Parents and guardians are not to suppose themselves to be good Christians while the minds of their children are uncultivated and neglected.³⁵⁸

Campbell went on to assert that the Church needed an intelligent ministry. Quick to realize that his words might be offensive or misinterpreted, and demonstrating the tight-rope walk that Little described, Campbell offered an explanation along with continuing to tout the importance of education:

We do not wish to frighten our brethern in the ministry, by the assertion made at the head of the last paragraph. The term intelligent ministry may be used with a greater or less degree of signification. In this connexion, we purpose to use the term in a restricted sense. Under the term intelligent ministry, we intend first of all things, a ministry that is practically acquainted with the doctrines and precepts of the holy religion of Jesus, as they are found recorded in the Book of God, the Holy Bible. This is knowledge that is indispensable to the Christian minister, and without which he cannot proceed as the minister of Christ But we must consider that we have to study other things in order to be able to study the Bible. A knowledge of the arts and sciences is particularly useful and needful in that study. . . . He must acquire a knowledge of Holy Scriptures by first putting himself in possession of a knowledge of the arts and sciences, by which that knowledge is acquired. It is the duty of the pastor to be as well if not better informed than the best instructed portion of his congregation – otherwise how can he be profitable to them?³⁵⁹

Campbell, like many of the other Negro periodical editors who were literate and proponents of education, knew that in order to convince congregations to support the Church's educational endeavors, their sense of Christian duty had to be appealed to first. Sometimes the advocates for education used scripture to illustrate and lend support to their cause. Using scripture was one way to indicate that the speaker was a man of God and had a spiritual foundation, thus possible endearing him to those who clung tightly to

³⁵⁸ Jabez Pitt Campbell, "Wants of the Church," *The Christian Recorder*, 19 March 1855.

³⁵⁹ Jabez Pitt Campbell, "Wants of the Church," *The Christian Recorder*, 2 October 1854.

the belief that only those men who were well-grounded in Biblical scripture could be worthy of being leaders, ministers, and listened to. Here a contributor, S.B. Williams, opened his editorial with a quote from the book of Proverbs and then went on to espouse the importance of an educated ministry, chastising those who dare to speak out against education. It is almost as if beginning with a reference to scripture softened the blow about to be delivered and/or made the reader more receptive to the argument being made.

“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy gettings get understanding” (Proverbs, 4:7). How often do we hear arguments presented against education, even in this enlightened age of the world! And ministers are not free from this outrage upon humanity. With what audacity do they appear before their congregations, making their boast that they do not understand Grammar, Geography, and all the different branches of learning – and rather in an indirect manner denouncing those that do understand! How often is the sacred scriptures misapplied where God speaks to the prophet, and tells him to open his mouth, and He will fill it. ... Yet who will attempt to argue that the prophet was without an education? No one! For the prophets attended a prophetic school, that they might be prepared to come before the public. Then how much should ministers of the gospel in this enlightened age of the world apply themselves to study? ... The person or persons who claim that the minister is prepared, if called by God, without applying himself to study, neither understand the scripture, nor the design of God in calling men to the ministry.³⁶⁰

Williams made a strong and clear point for the importance of education and couched it within a Biblical example to make it more palatable to the naysayers.³⁶¹ This is a form of the argument that is seen over and over again within the Church, in particular at conference meetings.

³⁶⁰ S.B. Williams, “An Educated Ministry,” *The Christian Recorder*, 2 June 1866.

³⁶¹ The first recorded instance of a Church member arguing against an educated ministry occurs at the Baltimore Conference in 1843. This incident is discussed in the previous chapter.

Another example of individual ministers speaking up for education and speaking out against those who oppose the idea of an educated ministry is given by Rev. Geo. T. Watkins.

An intelligent and educated ministry is a spiritual necessity, and an ignorant ministry cannot, in this enlightened age, be consistently tolerated for a moment by an intelligent man or woman. ... Yet, who does not know, that we have men in our own beloved connexion, who scornfully repudiate it [education] "as a false doctrine." Yes! We have some ministers, (thank God they are but few), who profess to be educated themselves, but who encourage by their acts, I mean their official acts, the sending forth as ambassadors of Christ, the expounders of the Gospel, of men who can no more read it to the people, or for themselves, than they can pluck the stars from their azure home. Such men are an incubus upon the proper development of our people, and a disgrace to the profession to which they have called themselves.³⁶²

With his severe tone and harsh language, Watkins truly called ministers to task and addressed several pertinent issues in this editorial, in particular the role of a minister, the importance of education and racial uplift. He reminded the readers that ministers were supposed to be leaders of and for the Negro people and should lead by example. He reminded the readers that ministers were a group of professionals (he likened their need to be educated and trained to that of physicians). Watkins brought up another topic often discussed in the Church, that of the style and purpose of preaching and how it related to having an educated ministry. He insisted that preaching was more teaching than simply talking and spouting off opinions.

There are many absurd, false, and unphilosophical opinions entertained concerning the preaching of God's word, but none more destructive than the idea, that an ignorant and stupid dolt can be an "approved" and acceptable minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Paul speaks of the "foolishness of preaching," he does not mean that a preacher should be a

³⁶² Geo. T. Watkins, "An Educated Ministry," *The Christian Recorder*, 31 January 1863.

fool, though some men seem so to understand him. Preaching means teaching, not simply talking, but teaching.³⁶³

Finally, Watkins reminded the readers that an uneducated minister was not a good representation of the Negro race.

To say that in order for a man to educate or instruct others, he must possess the requisite ability to do so, is to indulge in a very plain proposition. A physician is presumed to understand the duties and responsibilities of his profession, and to be fully adequate to perform them. The same may be said of the lawyer, or editor, and of any and all of the learned professions. Are the duties and responsibilities of the Christian minister less important than those of the physician, the lawyer, or the editor? Is the body of more importance than the soul? The jewel of less value than the casket which contains it? When a man's life is in danger, if he be an intelligent man, he will send for a physician who has studied the physical structure of man, one who thoroughly understands his entire anatomy. He will not send for a well known botch, one who glories in his ignorance, and rejoices that he "never rubbed his head against a college wall, and don't know a letter in the book." A minister of the gospel should be as well qualified for his position in the community, as a physician is for his.³⁶⁴

Education, as has been documented throughout this dissertation, was seen as a means of elevating the Negro people; as a way of improving the status of the bleak plight for the descendants of African slaves; of putting Negroes on or near equal ground as whites. As with other *Christian Recorder* editorials, Watkins used scripture to support his arguments and showed how scripture can be used to argue whichever point the author wanted to support.

An Educated Ministry. It should be clearly kept in mind that education for Negroes at the time in which the A.M.E. Church was building its institutions was strictly forbidden by law in many states. Therefore the majority of the clergy who came to be

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

ordained in the Church had not received any formal education let alone basic schooling, and were thus illiterate. Despite the laws and other obstacles (financial and opponents), the leadership of the Church often set the education of its ministers as a priority. Even though sometimes no action was taken or action was slow to come, many resolutions were passed during A.M.E. Church conventions supporting the idea of education and an educated ministry:

the educational interests were kept clearly before the brethren. The resolutions leading toward progress in this direction are worthy of being kept in mind as the first formulated effort toward a course of regular study. It was first resolved, "That the elders and deacons of the Connection make use of all the means in our power from henceforth to cultivate our minds and increase our store of knowledge." Then, second, "That we recommend to all our elders and deacons, licensed preachers and exhorters, the diligent and indefatigable study of the following branches of useful knowledge: English Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Rollin's Ancient History, Modern History, Ecclesiastical History, Natural and Revealed Theology."³⁶⁵

Based upon these initial discussions at the Philadelphia Conference of 1842, Daniel Payne set the first resolution in motion that favored ministerial education. This resolution was also presented at the New York and the Baltimore Conferences. While there is not a document that explicitly states that the ministers should begin by attending the common schools run by the church, it can be surmised that those who did not have the basic rudiments of schooling would logically attend one of the A.M.E.'s common schools.

Richard H Cain³⁶⁶ was one of the ministers who supported Daniel Payne and who advocated for all A.M.E. ministers to be educated and who also supported the pursuit of

³⁶⁵ Payne, *History of the A.M.E. Church*, 141.

³⁶⁶ Cain is a significant figure in the A.M.E. Church. He was born in Greenbriar County, Virginia on April 12, 1825. He had no formal schooling, other than that which he received in Sabbath-school, until he entered the ministry in 1846. He entered Wilberforce University in 1860, where he only spent one year. In 1864 he was sent to

higher learning at the collegiate level. Cain heralded the sentiments of the necessity for ministers to be educated, especially in the A.M.E. Church which was believed by Negroes living at that time and historical scholars to hold a prominent position in the Negro community. One of the themes that the A.M.E. Church weaved in with the concepts of racial uplift and self-determination was that of leading by example and being proud (not in a vain way, of course, because that would defy the *Doctrines of Discipline*), but in a way that motivated individuals within the Church to continuously seek out opportunities that made them beacons of light and hope for the rest of the Negro community. Cain appealed to this sense of pride and responsibility as a model for other denominations and as a model for the younger Negro generations.

If there is any department of instruction that needs educated teachers and leaders, it is in the A.M.E. Church. Situated as she is, holding a central ruling position among the masses, she is capable of gathering in more to the temple of divine truth than any other organization in this country. ... What the church needs is a class of teachers who are willing to suffer, and learn to suffer. We want, and must have, a ministry who will look to the interest of the rising generation, instructing them in the high and holy duties which pertain to this world as well as the future....The minister should be fully qualified for his high responsibilities.³⁶⁷

South Carolina as a missionary to the freedmen. In 1867 he was a delegate to the state constitutional convention. In 1868 he was elected to the state senate of South Carolina, he served two terms – March 4, 1873 to March 3, 1875 and March 4, 1877 to March 3, 1879 - as the representative from Charleston. In 1880, he was elected as an A.M.E. bishop. He helped found the Church's third college, Paul Quinn in Waco, Texas. In 1873 Wilberforce University conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him. There is also record (see Appendix G) of an impassioned speech he gave to the South Carolina legislature arguing the issue of racial tolerance and the Civil Rights Bill of 1875. Ronald L. Lewis, "Cultural Pluralism and Black Reconstruction: The Public Career of Richard H. Cain," *Crisis* (February 1978): 57-60, and A.W. Wayman, *Cyclopedia of African Methodism* (Baltimore, MD: Methodist Episcopal Book Depository, 1882).

³⁶⁷ Richard H. Cain, "The Necessity for an Educated Ministry in the A.M.E. Church," *Christian Recorder*, 2 August 1862.

As has been stated, within the A.M.E. Church there was an ongoing internal battle about educated and uneducated ministers. This battle seems to have begun at the Baltimore conference in 1843. These battles were not often recorded or spoken about because it portrayed some sort of division or dissent within the Church. However, a few ministers like Cain were bold enough to address it. Cain, like Watkins and others, chastised those who spoke out against education and those who thought less of educated ministers.

It has, no doubt, been a source of humiliation and shame to the better informed to listen to the tirades entered into by certain ignorants, claiming to be the instructors of the church, against education, and with an air of triumph, asked "*Who are the greatest rascals, robbers, and counterfeiterers among us but your educated men,*" as if wickedness and crime committee by these was the result of education rather than an evil and unregenerate soul. Such men are not competent to guide and instruct the people for their good.³⁶⁸

Not supporting education and criticizing educated ministers went against the goal of racial uplift and was counter-productive to setting a good example for the Negro community. The views of educated ministers dominated the discussion and support of education. There is no real way to know how uneducated ministers felt about the need for education. Their views are simply not recorded in Church documents and they did not write any opinion pieces that were submitted to any periodicals or journals. From what is documented about the discussions on education I could extrapolate at a few possibilities. One, uneducated ministers did not support any type of education for any of the clergy. Two, uneducated ministers supported education for the Negro community and maybe even their congregants, but not for the clergy. Three, uneducated ministers supported some level of education, maybe heavily theological for the clergy.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

As did Jabez Campbell and George Watkins, Cain turned to the scriptures to explain how education was part of God's plan and desire for his people.

This duty is inculcated by the great Apostle of the Gentiles in his memorable charge to Timothy, where he commands study and research; nay, more, he impresses this as a duty which must be performed, in order to a correct understanding of the Word of God, "for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer; but if thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. ... These things command and teach." ... Who can read this passage, and then condemn an educated ministry? If there is to be a continual advance in religious sentiment, in moral, social, and intellectual culture, then we must have a class of teachers qualified for the great work.³⁶⁹

But even among those who advocated for an educated ministry there did not seem to be a consensus on what that education would consist of. Some proponents were fully aware that most ministers did not even have the basics of reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic, and they advocated for ministers to attend the schools that offered primary education. Others advocated for education of the collegiate level at Wilberforce. Yet others promoted theological training. And even in their advocacy the different forms of education were not clearly delineated

Moral Training. One of the aspects that made the A.M.E. Church's support of education problematic was the fact that the various proponents of education had different reasons for supporting education and differing goals for the types of instruction and curriculum. One of the problematic issues with a specific area, moral training, was that for many supporters of education within the A.M.E. Church, it could not be reconciled with intellectual development at the collegiate level, which is perhaps where all the initial controversy on an educated ministry stemmed from. Many of the editorials written and

³⁶⁹ Ibid. The Bible passage Cain quotes is from 1 Timothy, verse 6.

sermons preached encouraged moral and intellectual development, but at the same time gave precedence to moral training as being more important. Here is one editorial that illustrates the concern of how to combine moral training and higher learning.

Scarcely anyone will be found to deny that moral training is more important than intellectual. The formidable obstacle in the way of success in colleges has always been the great difficulty of preserving the moral purity of young men when masses are thrown together, removed from the influences of home, and acting often fatally upon each other's character. Amid this great difficulty, everything ought to be done so to arrange the system of instruction as to produce the best moral effect. This will not be accomplished by neglecting its intellectual character. We are only influenced by that which we respect. But, by all means, we should present, as far as possible, intellectual and moral greatness, not divorced, but in union.³⁷⁰

It was clear that while individuals supported education in general, moral development was seen as more important than intellectual.

Education is, consequently, conditioned, not only upon the existence of rational faculties, but also upon their adaptation for intellectual and moral development....the true system of education demands the development of all these faculties. It does not make a selection of the intellectual capacities, involving practically a rejection of the moral powers, and confining itself to the cultivation of the former to the neglect of the latter....The true system of education demands, also, that all the faculties of the soul be developed in due proportion....And as the moral faculties are relatively the superior ones, the preference must be given to them, and their cultivation made prominent in the true system of education.³⁷¹

There may have been a fear that intellectual development would steer students away from their Christian roots. In other editorials moral development was touted as a Christian responsibility.

³⁷⁰ Author unknown, "Moral Training of the Young," *Christian Recorder*, 2 March 1861.

³⁷¹ Author unknown, "The True System of Education," *Christian Recorder*, 15 August 1868.

The true system of education is controlled both in its theory and practice by the acknowledged fact, that man has fallen, and the revealed fact, that he has been redeemed....it teaches the essential truths of Christianity revealed in the Bible, and through them as means, reaches the moral faculties of man, produces a spiritual transformation of the heart, awakens a rational insight into moral distinctions, imparts a knowledge of moral principles, stimulates conscience in enforcing its moral imperatives, controls the will in its moral choices, and regulates the activities of the life by the standard of the Higher Law of God....In other words, the true system of education must so cultivate all the faculties of man, and bring to bear upon them such influences, as will secure a virtuous character, a useful life, and a happy immortality.³⁷²

These comments spoke to the Church's desire to be unique in its educational institutions.

This was a time in which the freedmen's organizations were establishing schools and the A.M.E. Church was going to stand apart by building institutions for the Negroes by the Negroes (self-determination) and maintaining strong ties to the Church, thus Christianity and moral development.

Moral development, the teaching of Christian values, was also seen as part of contributing to racial uplift. As has been discussed, racial uplift was not just a concept, but a process of developing intellectual, social, and personal characteristics that Negroes under slavery had not had the opportunity to nurture. For Christian Negroes racial uplift included living a life that would free white people of negative stereotypes and speculations about the Negro – living a pious life as is often described in sermons and editorials – similar to living under the tenets of a Protestant work ethic.³⁷³ For the

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958/Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1930). Max Weber essentially argued that the ideas and values put forth by the Protestant Church (Weber's broad term to refer to denominations that are not Catholic) influenced the development of capitalism. I know that making a comparison to the Protestant work ethic, as analyzed by Weber, may be problematic. However, as discussed in chapter one, the A.M.E. Church did not truly have a term to describe their efforts to improve their life circumstances. Protestant work ethic

A.M.E. Church a significant part of this character building for the sake of racial uplift involved an adherence to certain moral values.³⁷⁴ Educational institutions created for Negroes had some responsibility for assisting individuals in developing themselves as moral individuals. These educational institutions had to teach these morals and values because the institution of slavery had robbed slaves of the opportunity to learn and develop an autonomous moral persona.

The world will excuse our fathers for not having an education, but it will not excuse us and our children....Educate yourselves and respect yourselves, and you will be respected everywhere, no difference what your color is....When we speak of education we use the word in its broadest sense – including the moral and religious training that is absolutely necessary that one may have self-respect. Educate man’s intellect without educating his heart, and you only make him a stronger instrument for Satan. The moral training is the most important part. If it be neglected, all the learning a man can get will not make him a desirable person for good society.³⁷⁵

Individuals affiliated with the A.M.E. Church seemed to have ambitious goals for what formal education would bring to the Negro community. Momentarily I will analyze how those ambitions translated into the curriculum that was offered and where the alumni (the majority if not all of those who attended the A.M.E. colleges and graduated were men) ended up.

seems to work as a semi-accurate description because it ties hard work (economic and social progress) with salvation (Christian, moral value). The spirit of capitalism does not apply because the socio-political and economic state of the Negro in the 18th century would not allow the Negro to become dominant in the United States. This idea of the Protestant work ethic and the spirit of capitalism as it relates to Negroes is something that E. Franklin Frazier discussed in his book *Black Bourgeoisie: The Rise of a New Middle Class in the United States* (New York: Collier Books, 1962).

³⁷⁴ This is evidenced (and has been discussed earlier) in the Preamble to the Free African Society and in the creation of the Doctrines of Discipline.

³⁷⁵ G.M. Elliot, “Our Obligations,” *The Christian Recorder*, 31 March 1881.

From time to time there were sermons preached on the subject of education. In the initial resolution by the A.M.E. Church supporting education, it was stated that every minister should regularly preach a sermon on the necessity of education. Record keeping being what it was, I have found but two sermons delivered on the subject of education. One of these sermons was delivered at the request of Bishop Lee.³⁷⁶ Rev. A.A. Whitman delivered a sermon entitled “An Educational Sermon on the Needs of the Negro.”³⁷⁷ Whitman conveyed three key points: (1) the A.M.E. educational institutions were open to everyone, regardless of denomination; (2) the purpose of the A.M.E. educational institutions were to teach the gospel and instill moral values; and (3) industrial training was important. These statements were made on the occasion of the establishment of Paul Quinn College, the Church’s third institution of higher education located in Texas and the only A.M.E. college located on the west of the Mississippi River.

Our doors are open to all and our chief interest centers in the bringing out of the usefulness of the Negro as a citizen and not in any denominational bias....We want the plain teachings of the gospel of Jesus made known to our people and incorporated into the conduct of their lives as a first principle for all education. Christ Jesus first; the arts and sciences

³⁷⁶ Bishop Benjamin F. Lee attended Wilberforce University beginning in 1865. He initially “tilled the University farm, cared for the horses, receiving private instruction from the faculty till he joined the regular classes of the school.” He was a member of the first Theology class at Wilberforce and graduated in 1872, as the class valedictorian. Immediately after graduation he was asked to chair the Pastoral Theology, Homiletics and Ecclesiastical History department and served as Wilberforce’s president after Daniel Payne resigned in 1875, making him Wilberforce University’s second A.M.E. president. Horace Talbert, *The Sons of Allen: Together with a Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Wilberforce University* (Xenia, Ohio: The Aldine Press, 1906), 180-181.

³⁷⁷ A. A. Whitman, “An Educational Sermon on the Needs of the Negro,” in James T. Haley, *Afro-American Encyclopaedia; or the Thoughts, Doings, and Sayings of the Race, Embracing Lectures, Biographical Sketches, Sermons, Poems, Names of Universities, Colleges, Seminaries, Newspapers, Books, and a History of the Denominations, Giving the Numerical Strength of Each* (Nashville, Tennessee: Haley & Florida, 1895), 451-454.

afterward...The Negro needs, first a moral education. Next to a moral education the Negro needs industrial training. The heart first and the hand next.³⁷⁸

Whitman's sermon address illustrated yet another aspect of the wide-ranging educational interests within the A.M.E. Church. While it is not clearly evidenced that the Church as an organization participated in the infamous industrial training versus liberal arts debate, individuals within the Church certainly had preferences that were voiced from time to time. Again, Whitman's words represented the ambitious yet not specifically delineated educational pursuit by the A.M.E. Church. The Church saw formal schooling as important, sought to create institutions of learning, and then offered a curriculum to meet the educational needs of a variety of people – ministers, those needing basic grammar, industrial training, and/or liberal arts. When I analyze the early curriculum it will be apparent that the first years of the A.M.E. colleges provided a potpourri of courses from which to choose.

Higher Learning. From the records available, it appears that ardent support for higher learning at the collegiate level did not begin in earnest until after the development of Wilberforce University. Prior to the purchase and establishment of Wilberforce the support of education was general and not specifically aimed at promoting collegiate courses. After Wilberforce was established and as other colleges began to be created by the A.M.E. Church more specific support for college education could be seen in the *Christian Recorder* and in the conversations and minutes of the general conferences as provided in Payne's historical account. This support also included reports on the progress of the A.M.E. colleges and solicitations for money to keep the colleges afloat.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

One way in which the Church encouraged college enrollment and attendance was by publishing articles written by individuals which chronicled the accomplishments of those who attended college as a way to encourage others to follow in those footsteps. The following excerpt quoted statistics of the number of congressmen and presidents who had college educations. The author also made the point that given the fact that a college education was not widely available during the time in which these members of Congress and presidents served (1789 to 1864) it would not have been unusual for them to not have an education, but the majority of the men found in Lanman's *Dictionary of the United States Congress*³⁷⁹ had a college education.

About fifty thousand men in these United States are students in colleges. . . . Perhaps a hundred thousand young men are now deliberating whether or not to "go to college," and for the advantage of this great multitude of young men is this article written. . . . Colleges are now more numerous relatively to population than formerly, and we are sure, from a careful investigation of the matter, that considerably less than one in a hundred of the men in the country have been graduates of college. . . . Again, take such a book as Allibone's *History of Authors*, and as you cast your eye over the catalogue of distinguished names, observe that nearly all of them have been educated in universities. All preachers, physicians, lawyers, teachers, and editors, at least, should have systematic education equal to that obtained in college.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁹ Charles Lanman was an author, journalist, and former secretary to Daniel Webster. He gathered the first collection of biographies of former and sitting members of Congress for his *Dictionary of Congress*, first published in 1864. The document has since been revised and reformatted and is currently known as the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Historical_Intro_Biographical_Directory.htm (accessed July 27, 2005 from the U.S. Senate's Art and History pages).

³⁸⁰ L.O. Haven, "Reasons for Going to College," *The Christian Recorder* 11 April 1868.

Even if this 1868 article was not specifically supporting an A.M.E. college, its contents were reprinted in an A.M.E. journal, so at the very least it was making A.M.E. members aware of the importance of a college education.

The above entry is proof that the *Christian Recorder* editors displayed their support for education in various ways. Most often they accepted editorials written by A.M.E. ministers or church members that advocated for the necessity of education. The *Christian Recorder* also included in its issues articles written in other publications that might lend support to the A.M.E. cause of creating educational institutions. There is no documented explanation as to why the *Christian Recorder* editors were willing to publish the work of education proponents submitted to other newspapers and journals, other than readers may have been loyal to one particular journal or newspaper and did not tend to read several different publications, but any voice that supported education and provided justification for its necessity was welcome. This was evidenced with an article written by a white man named Richard T. Ely³⁸¹ which was originally submitted to *Harper's Magazine*. Ely's article is a rambling jab at Harvard, an advertisement for a course of study in history, and a plea to make a distinction between a college and a university. The last point made by Ely concerning the distinction between a college and a university was something for the A.M.E. Church to pay careful attention to. For the A.M.E. reader it

³⁸¹ Ely made many contributions to higher education. He was a proponent of the historical method in America and his desire to bring German historicism to America created a methodological battle with his more conservative colleagues at John Hopkins. In 1892 he left John Hopkins University for the "more progressive" University of Wisconsin where he is credited with leading scholars in defense of academic freedom. His ideas were progressive and perhaps the *CR* editors thought including his work might encourage others to take their own progressive steps towards education. Biographical information from The New School, Department of Economics History of Economic Thought website <http://cepa.newschool.edu/het/profiles/ely.htm> (accessed July 21, 2005).

was a reminder that constructing an institution of education was just one of many steps, there must also be careful planning and organization towards the courses of study to be offered.

The so-called college departments, or “college proper,” is the one, which offers most difficulty to the reformer and the one where the most confusion prevails....The writer would thus separate distinctly college education and university education. Their methods and aims are different. The college should adhere to its old plan, give thorough instruction in Latin, Greek, French, German, mathematics, general history, etc. The courses should be, for the most part, prescribed, and contain such studies as would fit young men for taking a position in society as educated gentlemen....If colleges, then, consecrated themselves to this more modest but more useful plan of becoming higher and nothing more, we should find that our four hundred and twenty-five colleges were not such a great superfluity as we now think.³⁸²

Ely’s article could have been interpreted as a reminder to the A.M.E. community to not be ambiguous about its institutions and to clearly define a course of study that distinguishes its colleges from its common schools and academies. While it may seem like an odd contribution to include in the *Christian Recorder* the reality is that such an article could inspire continued thinking and discussion about education and its importance. The titles of articles, such as Ely’s “Need of Universities in the United States,” can be an indication of what the A.M.E. Church was striving towards.

It was no secret that the A.M.E. Church struggled financially to open and maintain Wilberforce University. Bishop Payne and other bishops after him solicited A.M.E. Churches and other institutions in the *Christian Recorder* for assistance in supporting the school. Despite the struggles that Wilberforce faced, having a collegiate

³⁸² Richard T. Ely, “Need of Universities in the United States,” *The Christian Recorder*, 24 June 1880.

institute was a goal that the Church pursued. Often the reasons of self-reliance and racial uplift were given for the Church to own and operate a university.

Second, we should have enough national pride about us to become self-sustaining in matters of education. We have been too easily satisfied with the scanty education which our white friends have, in charity, bestowed upon us. ... No, it is not enough. We must have an institution where we can have a *faculty of distinguished colored gentlemen*, teaching all the sciences, and elaborating systems, and theories of scientific investigation, producing something new, improving by research on old systems. We need a class of refined men and women, who will change the moral status of our people, we need educated daughters, that we may have educated wives and mothers, that our children may be taught, by the fireside, the great duties of life. Then we need this college, because there are thousands of our people who will now need it, who never could get it before. Then we will need it because there is so much prejudice in other institutions, *that it is crucifixion to our children to send them, in consequence of the Negrophobia, which is rampant* in nearly every institution of learning in this land. ... We wish to make Wilberforce one of the first institutions, where every branch will be taught, which is taught in universities.³⁸³

Cain, an ardent supporter of education, made many points that were salient to the educational philosophy of the Church. He stressed the aspect of self-determination and self-reliance, the importance of Negroes having their own university for the purposes of racial uplift – creating an educated community. Not only was education important, but creating and maintaining an institution by Negroes was important to combat racism and race phobia, but to also display independence. The true test might have been whether or not the A.M.E. colleges actually offered a curriculum that was reflective of all the lofty goals set by the supporters.

The “Ordinary Curriculum” in the A.M.E. Colleges. Within the study of higher education there are different types of institutions. Today there are associate’s colleges, which are “institutions where all degrees are at the associate's level, or where bachelor's

³⁸³ Richard H. Cain, “The Necessity of Wilberforce University for Our Youth: The demands for such an institution,” *The Christian Recorder*, 26 November 1864.

degrees account for less than ten percent of all undergraduate degrees. Excludes institutions eligible for classification as Tribal Colleges or Special Focus Institutions;” baccalaureate colleges, “institutions where baccalaureate degrees represent at least 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees and that award fewer than 50 master's degrees or 20 doctoral degrees per year;” master’s colleges and universities, “institutions that award at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees per year. (Some institutions above the master's degree threshold are included among Baccalaureate Colleges, and some below the threshold are included among Master's Colleges and Universities;” and doctorate-granting universities, “institutions that award at least 20 doctoral degrees per year (excluding doctoral-level degrees that qualify recipients for entry into professional practice, such as the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, etc.), excludes Special Focus Institutions and Tribal Colleges.”³⁸⁴ But even with all the classification, curriculum, mission statements, and purpose there truly are no clearly assigned type of institution.

In his seminal work on the education of blacks in the South, James D. Anderson aptly describes the range of curricula offered at Negro institutions from the late-eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries. Anderson explains what was earlier described by L.W. Bottoms as a frustration in attempting to create seminary education for Negroes and then realizing that many of those students had no primary education upon which to build.

Between 1870 and 1890, nine federal land-grant colleges were established in the South, and this number increased to sixteen by 1915. In that same year there were also seven state-controlled black colleges in the South. These federal land-grant and state schools, however, were colleges or

³⁸⁴ Classification system retrieved from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website, <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org> (accessed August 29, 2008).

normal schools in name only. According to the 1917 survey of black higher education conducted by Thomas Jesse Jones, only one of the sixteen black federal land-grant schools in the former slave states taught students at the collegiate level. Of the 7,513 students enrolled in the combined twenty-three black land-grant and state schools, 4,061 were classified as elementary level students, 3,400 were considered secondary level students, and only 12 were actually enrolled in the collegiate curriculum.³⁸⁵

Even though Anderson's work focuses on institutions in the South, what he describes is also true of educational institutions created in the North. I will give examples from Wilberforce University (Xenia, Ohio) and Morris Brown College (Atlanta, Georgia) to confirm this point.³⁸⁶ Even though the initial number of students taking actual collegiate level courses was low, those numbers eventually grew. The overarching goal however, was to begin to educate hundreds of thousands of Negroes who had not been able to obtain an education previously. This goal was accomplished through the efforts of various different organizations, and as Anderson wrote, the "leading Negro philanthropic organization was the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which paved the way for black religious denominations to establish and maintain colleges for black students."³⁸⁷

The institution that the A.M.E. Church created was a different institution than the one it purchased from the predominantly white Methodist Episcopal Church. The

³⁸⁵ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 238.

³⁸⁶ At this point I would like to remind the reader of the difficulty explained in the introduction of this dissertation in obtaining consistent data due to the fact that records were not always kept or the fact that records kept were often destroyed by natural disaster (in the case of Wilberforce, Morris Brown. And Edward Waters – fire and flood). This analysis of the early curriculum is based on a few limited primary sources from the actual colleges and secondary sources that explain the structure and curricular offerings of Negro colleges in general from the 1850s to the 1890s. Records seem to be more consistent and readily available beginning in 1900, at which point it is clear that these institutions were offering a college-level curriculum.

³⁸⁷ Anderson, *The Education of Black in the South*, 240.

original college was created by white men to educate Negro youth and then had to be closed due to the Civil War. In 1863, Daniel Payne, James A. Shorter, John G. Mitchell, David Blackburn, and Robert Nichols purchased Wilberforce University and obtained a new charter under the name of the A.M.E. Church.³⁸⁸

The ministers of the A.M.E. Church wanted to provide institutions to educate the clergy and instill moral and Christian training into young people:

Religion and religious instruction were very much a part of the work carried on by most of the academies and colleges founded before the Civil War – as they were of those founded after. . . . Virtually every educational institution established in the nineteenth century set out to instill piety and virtue in students and to explain to them the power of the beauty of God.³⁸⁹

It may seem to the 21st century scholar that a historically black church establishing a college in the 1800s may have been cause for concern among the white people.

However, for a period of time and to the advantage of the A.M.E. clergy, racial relationships and unwritten societal rules were more relaxed in the North than in the South. Also, apparently the college's original purpose and mission to train future clergy and spread the gospel of Christianity did not appear threatening or radical.³⁹⁰

Wilberforce under the M.E. control temporarily closed due to drop in enrollment (an effect of the Civil War) and re-opened with Payne at the helm as president. The

³⁸⁸ Benjamin W. Arnett and Samuel Y. Mitchell, *The Wilberforce Alumna: A Comprehensive Review of the Origin and Development of Wilberforce University* (Xenia, Ohio: Printed at the Gazette Office, 1885), 18-19.

³⁸⁹ Church and Sedlack, "The Antebellum College and Academy," 143.

³⁹⁰ Veysey wrote, "Mental and moral discipline was the purpose which lay behind a fixed four-year course of study in college," and that "educational and theological orthodoxy almost always went together." Laurence R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University*, 23 and 25.

school still had a principal, but instructors were referred to as professors. It is also not clear if the original curriculum was primary and grammar school level or collegiate level. Further, there are some indications that the early structure was geared more towards training clergy then providing higher education. Classification is an issue which is clearly not unique to the Negro colleges, but one that adds confusion none-the-less to the classification of early institutions of learning.³⁹¹

Payne's purchase of Wilberforce and his appointment as president seem to be matters of happenstance. In his autobiography he uses a footnote to recount how he purchased Wilberforce University and the property on behalf of the A.M.E. Church.³⁹² While he was president of Wilberforce he also continued to serve as bishop and church historian. He continued to be tenacious and resolute, and spared the Church no critique on its apparent lack of clear mission for education.

Our educational interests were becoming so scattered that the following spring (1881) I prepared an "Appeal to the Common Sense of the Clergy and Laity of the A.M.E. Church," hoping to convince them of the impossibility and danger of attempting to establish and support so many educational institutions.³⁹³

Payne's intuition about scattered educational interests would prove to be true over and over again as the A.M.E. Church struggled to maintain their educational institutions. His primary connection to Wilberforce was through fundraising; it seems he spent the

³⁹¹ It might be argued that what is most important is the fact that institutions of learning for Negroes existed, in particular those created by Negroes; and the fact of how they were classified is less important.

³⁹² Payne, *Recollections*, 149-150.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 236

majority of his presidency traveling to solicit funds, even resorting to paying some debts out of his personal pocket.

The school originally enrolled “six children who were put upon the study of elementary English.”³⁹⁴ As the enrollment grew so did the course offerings, in accordance to the training of the teacher(s) hired.

At the opening of the spring of 1864, the increasing numbers demanded another teacher, and Miss Esther T. Maltby, was secured. She reached Wilberforce with a Greek testament in her hand. She was an excellent Greek and Latin scholar, a good mathematician. Zealous for the moral purity of the children and youth committed to her care, she labored day and night to induce them to be Christian as well as scholars.³⁹⁵

Miss Maltby’s arrival secured coursework for the students in Greek, Latin, and mathematics and also ensured their moral training. Daniel Payne, who served as Wilberforce’s first president under A.M.E. control, in describing the curriculum wrote:

Our aim is to make Christian scholars, not mere book-worms, but workers, educated workers with God for man – to effect which we employ not the Classics and Mathematics only, but Science and Philosophy also, the former for their discriminating, polishing and cultivating influences, the latter for the quickness and exactness which they impart to the cognitive faculty, and the seed thoughts which they never fail to sow in the mind. And yet we hold that the Classics and Mathematics, as Science and Philosophy, can and must be considered to human well-being by the teachings, the sentiments and the spirit of Jesus.³⁹⁶

With these words Payne summed up the various aims underlying the A.M.E. Church’s involvement in higher education – creating an educated ministry, providing moral training, and stimulating intellectual abilities.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 20

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Daniel Payne, *The History of the Origins and Development of Wilberforce University* (Xenia, Ohio: Printed at the Xenia Gazette Office, circa 1877-1878).

Just as Wilberforce was beginning to make plans to expand, near the end of the 1864-1865 academic year in May of 1865, the school suffered a fire and most students did not return for the following autumn semester. What happened regarding the curriculum during the rebuilding period and the next mention of a curriculum is not documented. The next curricular note is that in 1866 the college opened a Theological and Classical department, a Scientific department in 1867, and a Normal department in 1872.³⁹⁷

In the Classical and Mathematical Department are the same as generally obtained in American colleges. In the Normal, we have the methods of Oswego. In the practicing schools of the Normal Department there is nothing peculiar but our manner of teaching Orthography and Orthoepy; here we employ analysis, that is to say, immediately after the pupil has spelled a word, he is required to tell how many letters, how many vowels, and how many consonants it contains, then to give the quality and quantity of every vowel, and to distinguish the characteristics of the sub-vocals and the aspirates. In our Theological Department, we employ both the inductive and deductive methods, allowing the largest liberty of investigation and of expression; excepting that which borders upon impiety and blasphemy.³⁹⁸

Although it is not clear that the courses being offered were solely college level as opposed to some mix of elementary through collegiate courses, the A.M.E. Church and other organizations such as the American Missionary Association called their institutions

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 22.

³⁹⁸ Ibid. Anderson indicates that the term normal school meant something different within black educational institutions. In describing Hampton's earliest curriculum, Anderson writes that "As a normal school Hampton was markedly different in structure and content from black teacher's colleges and liberal arts colleges. Like other normal schools of the nineteenth century, Hampton offered a curriculum of two or three years in length and did not grant a bachelor's degree. Most of Hampton's beginning students arrived with less than adequate elementary school education. In contrast to the normal school's pre-collegiate academic program, a teacher's college or department was a state, municipal, or incorporated private institution or an independent unit of recognized college or university having at least one four-year unified curriculum." Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 34-35.

colleges and universities. One of the factors that made it possible for the A.M.E. to call its institutions colleges or universities and to offer a wide-range of courses was that there were not regional or national accrediting agencies until the turn of the century.³⁹⁹

Judging by the list of faculty and their teaching areas it is evident that Wilberforce University offered courses in law, French literature, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, philosophy, and music. The faculty from 1863-1885 held a variety of degrees including bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, doctorates of divinity and their titles ranged from "teacher" to "instructor" to "principal" to "professor."⁴⁰⁰

Supplemental activities and organizations were established to promote the lessons in the classroom and to perpetuate the notion of racial uplift through intellectual and social development. For example, Mrs. Scarborough, who was a teacher at Wilberforce, began the Young Women's Reading Room, which eventually turned into the Reading Room Association. Its purpose was to "promote the habit of reading" in which "every effort has been made to render it attractive to the different grades of pupils and is a source

³⁹⁹ Goodchild wrote that in order to "redress the anomalies of the nineteenth century American college, the federal government, private associations, and philanthropic foundations devised various plans by the turn of the century to encourage greater uniformity among institutions of higher learning," "The Turning Point in American Jesuit Higher Education: The Standardization Controversy between the Jesuits and the North Central Association, 1915-1940" in *The History of Higher Education* 2nd edition, Lester F. Goodchild and Harold S. Weschsler, eds. (Boston, Massachusetts: Ginn Press, 1994), 528-550. The Commission on Higher Education was created in 1919 and the Commission of Secondary Schools in 1921. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was founded in 1895. The Commission on Colleges, which was developed to create the standards for accrediting colleges, was not created until 1912. Information retrieved from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools website <http://www.middlestates.org/index.html> and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools website <http://www.sacscoc.org/index.asp> (accessed August 27, 2008).

⁴⁰⁰ See Appendix I for a full example of the faculty at Wilberforce, their titles, and their areas of teaching.

of much good to the students who come to the University during the school year, developing or increasing the taste for reading.”⁴⁰¹ Mr. Scarborough organized the Young Men’s Reading Room Association.⁴⁰² Scarborough contributed of his own means to secure papers and periodicals for the reading association and strongly encouraged others to send papers and periodicals for the young men to read. Even after Scarborough discontinued his presidency of the association, the young men continued holding meetings. The authors of the papers, periodicals, and quarterlies to which the association subscribed served as role models and were in keeping with the aim to stimulate the mind and the spirit. The reading materials

contain articles written by men whose minds have been disciplined in the school of study and virtue; whose faculties have received polish, energy and firmness from their intimate acquaintance with literature and science; men who have the power of arresting the attention of the most listless by taking hold of their intellect in the proper way; who can transfuse into others their own knowledge and make it an imperishable part of the mind itself.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰¹ Arnett and Mitchell, *Wilberforce Alumnae*, 39-40.

⁴⁰² William S. Scarborough started his tenure at Wilberforce in 1877 and served as head of the Classical Department. Despite being born into slavery, he learned to read and write at an early age, even forging passes for slaves so that they could go home without being harassed. Because of the small number of literate men where he grew up (Macon, GA) at the age of ten he was elected secretary of an organization for colored people and was called upon to read the daily newspapers to the workmen during the war and explain the movements of the contending armies. In 1869 he entered Atlanta University and prepared to go to Oberlin College (one of the very few colleges which Negroes could attend at that time) in two years time. He graduated from Oberlin in 1875, and began teaching Greek, Hebrew, and Mathematics at Wilberforce. Scarborough was a member of several professional organizations including the Modern Language Association. He is the author of a text-book entitled, "First Lessons in Greek," which is the first Greek work ever published by a Negro man. Horace Talbert, *The Sons of Allen*, 159-161.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 41.

Inside and outside of the classroom the faculty helped the college to pursue its goals. Along with the reading associations, two literary societies were also formed – the Sodalian Society for young men for which the motto was “*Non Scholæ Sed Vitæ Discimas*” – we study not for school, but for life; and the Philomathean Society for young women, called the Tawana Literary Society, named in remembrance of the Indian name first given to the town then known as Wilberforce, whose objective was to “secure a proficiency in composition, education and the correct conduction of an organized body.”⁴⁰⁴ Both of these societies were open only to men and women who were classified in their studies above the sub-academic department and who were at least seventeen years old.⁴⁰⁵ The societies and reading associations have a long-standing history in the United States as the precursor to fraternities and sororities – the Philomathean Society founded in 1813, has its origins at the University of Pennsylvania and is the oldest continuously existing literary society in the United States and the oldest student group at the University of Pennsylvania.⁴⁰⁶

These societies, reading associations, and curriculum show that the founding fathers of Wilberforce University attempted to sew the threads of racial uplift and self-determination through every aspect of the college experience. As has been discussed in

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 41-43.

⁴⁰⁵ Instruction was classified into the following departments: (a) sub-academic, covering two years of study; (b) academic, covering three years of study; (c) scientific, covering four years; (d) normal, two years; (e) theological, four years; and (e) law, two years. McGinnis, *A History and an Interpretation of Wilberforce University*, 47.

⁴⁰⁶ Thomas S. Harding, *Literary Societies: Their Contribution to Higher Education in the United States, 1815-1876* (New York: Pageant Press International, 1971); and University of Pennsylvania, University Archives and Records Center, <http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/studtorg/philo/philo.html> (accessed June 29, 2009).

chapter one racial uplift and self-determination came in many forms during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Intellectual improvement as evidenced by attending college, participating in the activities of a literary society (rhetoric, oratory, and writing), and earning a college degree are just some of the strongest examples of uplift.

The founding of Morris Brown College, the fifth A.M.E. college, founded in 1881⁴⁰⁷ in Atlanta, Georgia, is less well documented than the founding of Wilberforce University, the first A.M.E. college. Nonetheless, the founding of Morris Brown is significant primarily because like the other A.M.E. colleges it was the first college founded for Negroes by Negroes in the state of Georgia, but also significant because it was founded near Atlanta University, Atlanta Baptist Seminary, which became Morehouse College, and Clark University, which eventually merged with Atlanta University to form Clark Atlanta University. Also, Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, which later became Spelman College, was founded just months before Morris Brown College.⁴⁰⁸ The North Georgia Annual Conference of the A.M.E. Church resolved the following in regards to establishing Morris Brown College:

⁴⁰⁷ Every source that documents the establishment of historically black colleges and universities lists the founding date of Morris Brown College as 1881. Upon a closer examination of the historical documents it is clear that 1881 marks the year in which the resolutions were passed by the A.M.E. Church in order to establish the college. The charter was granted by the state of Georgia, Morris Brown was dedicated and the doors actually opened in 1885. (Sewell and Troup, *Morris Brown College: The First Hundred Years*, 9-24). This erroneous reporting of the founding date is one of those issues discussed in an earlier chapter about the difficulty of doing historical research and analysis.

⁴⁰⁸ Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, Morris Brown College, and Spelman College form what is called the Atlanta University Center (AUC). The AUC is a non-profit corporation and is the oldest and largest consortium of black private higher education institutions in the world. Roebuck and Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education*, 53. Also see Drewry and

Whereas, the State of Georgia has become the great educator of the Anglo-Africans of the South, and especially Atlanta, the capital of the State; and whereas, the time has come that an educated ministry is demanded upon every hand – science and literature are making rapid progress over all the land – and we, as ministers of the gospel, are mindful of the fact infidelity and skepticism are making desperate their efforts to get in the van, and poison every mind with their diabolical influence; and whereas, they can only be properly met and vanquished by the wisdom, piety, virtue and truth of an educated ministry of the Gospel;

Resolved, that we, the North Georgia Annual Conference, do appoint a committee to select a suitable site in the city of Atlanta, or in the vicinity thereof, to erect a college building, for the training and education of our sons and daughters.⁴⁰⁹

The early days of Morris Brown College, similar in some ways to the early days at Wilberforce University, provided a mixture of course offerings and extracurricular activities. The first four leaders at Morris Brown were referred to as principals and the first instructor referred to as a teacher.⁴¹⁰ This implies that the early curriculum at Morris Brown was not college-level coursework. In a book chronicling the first one-hundred

Doermann, *Stand and Prosper: Private Black Colleges and Their Students*, and Vida L. Avery, “A Fateful Hour in Black Higher Education: The Creation of the Atlanta University System” (Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 2003). Further, Morris Brown College is named for Morris Brown who was the second bishop elected by the A.M.E. Church at the request of Richard Allen in 1828. He was born January 8, 1770, in Charleston, South Carolina and was never formally educated and thus left no written records of his career and life. He was one of the primary organizers of the A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He is reported to have been imprisoned for one year for helping many slaves to purchase their freedom. Wright, *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 115-118.

⁴⁰⁹ Sewell and Troup, *Morris Brown College: The First Hundred Years*, 11.

⁴¹⁰ Mrs. Mary E. McCree, an 1880 graduate of Atlanta University, who had been operating a private school in the basement of Bethel A.M.E. Church in Atlanta, was appointed as the first principal of Morris Brown and she served from 1885-1886. The second teacher hired that first year was Miss Annie B. Thomas who did not have a college degree upon her initial employment, but eventually earned a bachelor of arts degree. The second principal was Mrs. Alice Dugged Carey, a graduate of Wilberforce University. The third principal was Reverend E.W. Lee. During his tenure Morris Brown College published its first catalog (1887-1888). Sewell and Troup *Morris Brown College: The First Hundred Years*, 24-33.

years of the college, Sewell describes the students: “These one hundred and seven students had a very wide age spread as well as a wide grade spread which included work from kindergarten to the secondary level.”⁴¹¹ The first president is identified as Professor A. St. George Richardson and the first graduate (1890) received a certificate of graduation from the Normal Department. The Normal Department was the first collegiate level curriculum offered at Morris Brown. It is difficult to exactly know what type of curriculum was offered prior to 1901 because no catalog or other written record of the course offerings exists. From the description found in the Morris Brown centennial history book and the A.M.E. history book, it is safe to assume that the curriculum spanned from kindergarten through high school, including a two-year teacher training certificate program, and the curriculum eventually grew to include collegiate-level courses and degree programs.

The years 1891-1902 mark a time of greatest change during the beginning phases of Morris Brown College. Under the leadership of Professor A. St. George Richardson a second wing was added to the original building, the enrollment of students above the secondary level increased, and five more classes of young women graduated from the normal department.⁴¹² And in keeping with the A.M.E. desire to create a cadre of educated ministers, the department of theology opened in 1894, with an enrollment of twelve men and Reverend E. W. Lee as its first dean.⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 24.

⁴¹² Ibid., 34-35.

⁴¹³ Ibid. In 1900, the theological department, by vote of the Morris Brown College executive board, became Turner Theological Seminary.

It was not until 1901 that there was a clear indication that Morris Brown College offered purely collegiate level courses.

Graduates from accredited secondary schools that offer courses of study which meet the entrance requirements will be admitted without examination upon the presentation of the proper certificate. For membership in the institution persons must have good moral character, and must pledge themselves to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks, and tobacco in every form while a member of the school.⁴¹⁴

This statement from the college catalog alludes to the fact that the primary focus of Morris Brown was on students who were prepared to be instructed at the college level, but also expected to be of good moral character – reinforcing the goals of creating an institution for higher learning and moral training. However, the catalog listed eleven academic departments, not all of which are college-level, which confirms that the institution continued to offer non-college level courses into the 1900s. The departments listed are as follows: collegiate, normal, academic, theological, English, law, missionary music, art, commercial and industrial. In addition to these eleven departments there was mention of a professional course for nurses under the Industrial Department and post-graduate courses in philosophy, jurisprudence, biblical literature, political science, ancient languages, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology for those students “who have taken a degree in this or other schools.”⁴¹⁵

There were 445 students enrolled for the 1901-1902 academic year, 239 females and 206 males. The daily schedule included devotions, one hour of manual labor, evening prayer, and one hour break for recreation, meals, and a bedtime of nine-thirty. To accompany this daily schedule was a strict code of conduct regulating behavior in and

⁴¹⁴ *Morris Brown College Catalog 1901-1902.*

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*

out of the classroom.⁴¹⁶ Finally, like at Wilberforce University, though no description was given, there were three literary societies at Morris Brown.

Daniel Payne worked tirelessly to promote and create institutions of higher education. He fought many battles and eventually gained enough support to buy and rebuild Wilberforce University and several more colleges to be owned and operated by the A.M.E. Church. The early structure and curricular offerings of the A.M.E. colleges met several purposes. The colleges provided courses to meet a wide range of educational levels for a people who in the mid-1800s were largely illiterate or under-educated. Although the A.M.E. Church as an organization did not have a specific philosophy for its educational institutions, each college did articulate an aim for its college and students. Judging by the information available from Wilberforce University and Morris Brown College, the educational philosophy for the colleges created by the African Methodist Episcopal Church was geared towards educating ministers and training teachers and improving the life circumstances of the Negro people living in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by providing them with an educational facility that would meet their needs.

The A.M.E. Church, Racial Uplift, Self-Determination, and Education

Joshua fit de battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho,
 Joshua fit de battle of Jericho An' de walls come tumblin' down.
 You may talk about yo' king ob Gideon,
 You may talk about yo' man ob Saul,
 Dere's none like good ole Joshua at de battle ob Jericho.
 Up to de walls ob Jericho, he marched with spear in hand
 "Go blow dem ram horns" Joshua cried, "Kase de battle am in my han"
 Den de lam' ram sheep horns begin to blow, trumpets begin to soun'
 Joshua commanded de chillen to shout, AN' de walls came tumblin' down.
 Dat mornin' Joshua fit de battle ob Jericho, Jericho, Jericho

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

Joshua fit de battle of Jericho, An' de walls come tumblin' down.⁴¹⁷

The establishment and maintenance of historically black colleges and universities is analogous to Joshua in the battle of Jericho. In the Old Testament of the Bible, Joshua led the Israelites to the Promise Land. Joshua and the Israelites were fighting to have a space of their own without persecution from the Hebrews. Negroes living in the United States, post-slavery had many hurdles to overcome as they sought to gain the loss of social cohesion, family, education, paid employment, and freedom. While the establishment of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its colleges came centuries before the familiar 1960s battle for civil rights, Richard Allen, Daniel Payne and other key leaders within and supporters of the A.M.E. Church fought a battle to provide education for Negroes beginning in the eighteenth century. Richard Allen fought a battle to establish the A.M.E. Church and provide Negroes with a place in which they could worship freely. Daniel Payne fought a battle (sometimes against his own church) to provide a place where Negroes could obtain an education. Both men fought a battle that would allow Negroes to provide these spaces for themselves. The Negroes under the leadership of the A.M.E. Church were working to create spaces for themselves where they could worship and learn without persecution from the whites.

In the introduction of this dissertation I pondered:

Given the modern day challenges and struggles, I wondered, despite being unable to foresee the troublesome future, why did the A.M.E. Church become involved in establishing institutions of higher education? More specifically, why was education important to the A.M.E. Church and its leaders (many of whom were not literate themselves)? What prompted the first independent black church, still a relatively young denomination, to

⁴¹⁷ Johnson and Johnson, *The Books of American Negro Spirituals*, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho," 56-58.

decide that even before the end of slavery, black people needed an institution of higher learning?

The primary answer to my question is that the African Methodist Episcopal Church engaged in the pursuit of creating colleges for the purpose of promoting racial uplift and self-determination. While the process of making this discovery was not an easy one, I feel satisfied that indeed the A. M.E. Church supported and utilized the rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination. This clarity is evident in the journals and newspapers owned and operated by the A.M.E. Church; by editorials and opinion pieces contributed by A.M.E. Church leaders to other journals and newspapers; by the sermons preached and pamphlets produced by A.M.E. Church leaders and members; and through the creation of institutions of higher learning.

Many organizations and institutions began to use the rhetoric of racial uplift and self-determination to support their causes. The story of the A.M.E. Church and its colleges is important to tell because the A.M.E. Church was the first predominantly black denomination founded for and by blacks, as were their colleges. The A.M.E. Church is the largest black church denomination in the world and has sponsored the most colleges and universities of any of the predominantly black denominations. This dissertation gives institutional meaning to the ideals of racial uplift and self-determination through two of society's most fundamental social units – the church and the college.

As historically black colleges and universities and small, private, church-affiliated colleges find themselves in difficulty based on finances and accreditation, it is important to preserve and tell their stories. The stories of HBCUs and in particular the A.M.E.-affiliated HBCUs offer an important contribution to the literature in the fields of history, education, and religion. While there are some books that have been written about the

A.M.E. Church, there have not been any studies conducted on the discourse underlying the creation of its institutions of higher education. Through the readings I have done, I have yet to find the story of the A.M.E. colleges fully documented. The majority of A.M.E. college histories are short in-house publications written by the college's historian, president, or a faculty member.

There is no comprehensive study on the colleges done by someone not affiliated with the colleges or the Church. The story of the A.M.E. Church colleges is significant because of the men involved who created the colleges and because of the particular time in history in which this was accomplished. The story is important because it fills a gap in the existing literature. It is my hope that this dissertation helps to fill a gap in that history and gives voice to all the men and women who helped to establish the first colleges maintained by the A.M.E. Church.

Members, don't git weary, Members don't git weary,
 Members don't git weary, for de works mos' done
 O, keep yo' lamp trim'd an' a burnin', Keep yo' lamp trim'd an' a burnin'
 Keep yo' lamp trim'd an' a burnin' for de works mos' done⁴¹⁸

It is my hope that the legacy of racial uplift and self-determination started by the early A.M.E. Church leaders continues on and that those institutions of learning overcome their trials and tribulations and become stronger and stable as they once were.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., "Member, Don't Git Weary," 155-157.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A⁴¹⁹

Preamble of the Free African Society

12th, 4th mo., 1778 – Whereas, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, two men of the African race, who, for their religious life and conversation have obtained a good report among men, these persons, from a love to the people of their complexion whom they beheld with sorrow, because of their irreligious und uncivilized state, often communed together upon this painful and important subject in order to form some kind of religious society, but there being too few to be found under the like concern, and those who were, differed in their religious sentiments; with these circumstances they labored for some time, till it was proposed, after a serious communication of sentiments, that a society should be formed, without regard to religious tenets, provided, the persons lived an orderly and sober life, in order to support one another in sickness, and for the benefit of their widows and fatherless children.

ARTICLES.

17th, 5th mo., 1787 – We, the free Africans and their descendants, of the City of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, or elsewhere, do unanimously agree, for the benefit of each other, to advance one shilling in silver Pennsylvania currency, a month; and after one year's subscription from the date hereof, then to hand forth to the needy of this Society, if any should require, the sum of three shillings and nine pence per week of the said money: provided, this necessary is not brought on hem by their own imprudence.

And it is further agreed, that no drunkard nor disorderly person be admitted as a member, and if an should prove disorderly after having been received, the said disorderly person shall be disjointed from us if there is not nit amendment, by being informed by two of the members, without having nay of his subscription money returned.

And if any should neglect paying his monthly subscription for three months, and after having been informed of the same by two of the members, and no sufficient reason appearing for such neglect, if he do not pay the whole the next ensuring meeting, he shall be disjointed form us, by being informed by two of the members its an offender, without having any of his subscription money returned.

⁴¹⁹ Preamble of the Free African Society, www.pbs.org/wgbh.html

Also, if any person neglect meeting every month, for every omission he shall pay three pence, except in case of sickness or any other complaint that should require the assistance of the Society, then, and in such a case, he shall be exempt from the fines and subscription during the said sickness.

Also, we apprehend it to be just and reasonable, that the surviving widow of a deceased member should enjoy the benefit of this Society so long as she remains his widow, complying with the rule thereof, excepting the subscriptions.

And we apprehend it to be necessary, that the children of our deceased members be under the care of the Society, so far as to pay the education of their children, if they cannot attend the free school; also to put them out apprentices to suitable trades or places, if required.

Also, that no member shall convene the Society together; but, it shall be the sole business of the committee, and that only on special occasions, and to dispose of the money in hand to the best advantage, for the use of the Society, after they granted the liberty at a monthly meeting, and to transact all other business whatsoever, except that of Clerk and Treasurer.

And we unanimously agree to choose Joseph Clark to be our Clerk and Treasurer; and whenever another should succeed him, it is always understood, that one of the people called Quakers, belonging to one of the three monthly meetings in Philadelphia, is to be chosen to act as Clerk and Treasurer to this useful Institution.

The following person met, viz., Absalom Jones, Richard Allen, Samuel Baston, Joseph Johnson, Cato Freeman, Caesar Cranchell, and James Potter, also William White, whose early assistance and useful remarks we found truly profitable. This evening the articles were read, and after some beneficial remarks were made, they were agreed unto.

APPENDIX B⁴²⁰

An Address To Those Who Keep Slaves and Approve The Practice

The judicious part of mankind, will think it unreasonable, that a superior good conduct is looked for from our race, by those who stigmatize us as men, whose baseness is incurable, and may therefore be held in a state of servitude, that a merciful man would not doom a beast to; yet you try what you can, to prevent our rising from a state of barbarism you represent us to be in, but we can tell you from a degree of experience, that a black man, although reduced to the most abject state human nature is capable of, short of real madness, can think, reflect, and feel injuries, although it may not be with the same degree of keen resentment and revenge, that you who have been, and are our great oppressors would manifest, if reduced to the pitiable condition of a slave. We believe if you would try the experiment of taking a few black children, and cultivate their minds with the same care, and let them have the same prospect in view as to living in the world, as you would wish for your own children, you would find upon the trial, they were not inferior in mental endowments. I do not wish to make you angry, but excite attention to consider how hateful slavery is, in the sight of that God who hath destroyed kings and princes, for their oppression of the poor slaves. Pharaoh and his princes with the posterity of King Saul, were destroyed by the protector and avenger of slaves. Would you not suppose the Israelites to be utterly unfit for freedom, and that it was impossible for them, to obtain to any degree of excellence? Their history shows how slavery had debased their spirits. Men must be willfully blind, and extremely partial, that cannot see the contrary effects of liberty and slavery upon the mind of man; I truly confess the vile habits often acquired in a state of servitude, are not easily thrown off; the example of the Israelites shows, who with all that Moses could do to reclaim them from it, still continued in their habits more or less; and why will you look for better from us, why will you look for grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? it is in our posterity enjoying the same privileges with your own, that you ought to look for better things.

When you are pleaded with, do not you reply as Pharaoh did, "Wherefore do ye Moses and Aaron let the people from their work, behold the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest from their burdens." We wish you to consider, that God himself was the first pleader of the cause of slaves.

That God who knows the hearts of all men, and the propensity of a slave to hate his oppressor, hath strictly forbidden it to his chosen people, "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land." Deut. 23. 7. The meek and humble Jesus, the great pattern of humanity, and every other virtue that can adorn and dignify

⁴²⁰ Richard Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Philadelphia: Martin and Boden Printers, 1833).

men, hath commanded to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate and despitefully use us. I feel the obligations, I wish to impress them on the minds of our colored brethren, and that we may all forgive you, as we wish to be forgiven, we think it a great mercy to have all anger and bitterness removed from our minds; I appeal to your own feelings, if it is not very disquieting to feel yourselves under dominion of wrathful disposition.

If you love your children, if you love your country, if you love the God of love, clear your hands from slaves, burthen not your children or your country with them, my heart has been sorry for the blood shed of the oppressors, as well as the oppressed, both appear guilty of each others blood, in the sight of him who hath said, he that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.

Will you, because you have reduced us to the unhappy condition our color is in, plead our incapacity for freedom, and our contented condition under oppression, as a sufficient cause for keeping us under the grievous yoke. I have shown the cause,--I will also show why they appear contented as they can in your sight, but the dreadful insurrections they have made when opportunity has offerred, is enough to convince a reasonable man, that great uneasiness and not contentment, is the inhabitant of their hearts. God himself hath pleaded their cause, he hath from time to time raised up instruments for that purpose, sometimes mean and contemptible in your sight, at other times he hath used such as it hath pleased him, with whom you have not thought it beneath your dignity to contend. Many have been convinced of their error, condemned their former conduct, and become zealous advocates for the cause of those, whom you will not suffer to plead for themselves.

APPENDIX C⁴²¹

ESSAY ON THE EDUCATION OF THE MINISTRY

The Ministers of the Gospel ought to be well educated.

We now conclude our essays by an appeal to all who are concerned, i.e. the whole Church. And first: We appeal to the venerable fathers of the Connection, and call upon you to assist us in this glorious enterprise by giving your sanction to our efforts. While we acknowledge that your advanced life and domestic cares may present insurmountable carriers to your improvement, we hail you as the pioneers of the Church. You, with the labors upon your shoulders, entered the forest, hewn down the timber, and erected the stupendous fabric which now constitutes our Zion. O, cheer us, then while we labor to beautify and array it on to perfection! Let is never be said that you were opposed to the cause of sacred learning, or that you hindered the car of improvement. But while you are descending to your peaceful and honorable graces, let us hear your invigorating voices saying unto us: “Go on, my sons, go on!” Then shall the bright pages of history hand down your memories as a precious legacy to unborn generations, who, with hearts of gratitude, shall look to this period and thank heaven their progenitors were not the enemies, but the friends of education. Beloved young brethren, we appeal to you, because a glorious career of usefulness lies before you – an uncultivated field, long and wide, invites you to enter and drive the plowshare heavier throughout its length and breadth. Truth declares that the soil is deep and rich, and will yield an abundant harvest. Up! Up! To the toil. The reward is in the fruits – your resting place in heaven. Put forth every effort, employ every means, embrace every opportunity to cultivate your minds, and enrich them with the gems of holy learning. Be not satisfies with little things, lift your standard to the skies, and your attainments will be great. Swear eternal hatred to ignorance, and let your banner float upon the breeze of heaven with this inscription:

Wisdom to silver we prefer,
And gold is dross compared to her.

All difficulties then will fade away before you, and knowledge will become just what the Creator designed it to be, an element of your manhood, in which you may live and move and have your being.

Venerable mothers of Israel! We call upon you to aid us in this glorious reformation. Give us your influence; give us your money; give us your prayers. Hannah-

⁴²¹ Daniel Payne. *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 195.

like, dedicate your sons to the work of God before they are born; then Samuel-like, they will be heaven-called and heaven-sent, full of the spirit of wisdom, and full of grace. Teach them from their infancy to value learning more than silver and wisdom more than gold. Teach them that the glory of their manhood consists not in eating and dressing, but in the cultivation of the immortal mind and the purity of their morals. Thus will you inspire them with the love of what is great and good, paving the way to their future greatness and their future glory. O, who can sleep when earth and heaven are in motion! Who can stand aloof from a work in which the angels find delight? Who will dare to oppose that which God himself has decreed? The fall of ignorance is as certain as the fall of Babylon, and the universal spread of knowledge as the light of the Son, for the Lord hath said, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." And who does not see that this divine declaration is daily fulfilling? The press is pouring forth its millions of publications every year, in every form, and almost in every language, so that books and newspapers are becoming as common as the stones in the street. Common schools, seminaries and colleges are being erected in almost every land and every nation. Lyceums, literary societies are being instituted among men of all ranks and all complexions, so that it may truly be said that the beaming chariot of the genius of knowledge is rolling triumphantly onward to the conquest of the world; therefore, the oppressors of education must either ground the weapons of their unequal warfare or be crushed to death beneath its ponderous wheels.

A period of light has already dawned upon the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Its morning star was seen in the doings of the General Conference of 1844; its opening glories were manifested in the decrees of the Educational Convention of 1845. Blessed is the man or woman who will the enterprise of heaven! Yea, thrice blessed is the one who will hasten on this age of light! In relation to this subject we can say with Moses, "O, that all the Lord's people were prophets!"

As for ourselves, we have dedicated our all to this sacred work. We have lain our souls and bodies, our time, our influence, our talents, upon the altar of our people's improvement and elevation; there we intend to bleed, and smoke, and burn, till like itself shall be extinct.

The calamitous fact that our people are entombed in ignorance and oppression forever stares us in the face; it shall be the fuel of the flames that consume us, and while we talk, and write, and pray, we shall rise above opposition and toil, cheered and inspired by that God whose lips have said, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge."

APPENDIX D⁴²²

Whereas, the sacred cause of education is of such vital importance to the interest of the Church in particular, and to the world in general, that instead of being contented with what little we have done, we feel it our duty to make new and greater efforts to advance its cause among us in such a way as will result in a general diffusion of its blessings among our benighted race; therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That we recommend to our ministers and people the importance of holding a general Convention in the city of Philadelphia on the 30th day of October next, for the purpose of forming a literary institution, and devising such other measures as will place the cause of education among us on a solid and lasting foundation, so that all our people, in a greater or less degree, may hereafter enjoy its benign influence.

Resolved, 2nd. That there be central committees formed for the purpose of carrying into effect the object embraced in the first resolution, and that this committee shall have the power to appoint sub-committees in other places, for the purpose of securing a general attendance of all persons of influence and means among us.

Resolved, 3rd. That this committee shall consist of seven members of our Church, viz.: four of the itinerant preachers and three of the laity.

Resolved, 4th. That a copy of this preamble and resolutions be sent to each Annual Conference, with a respectful request for their adoption.

⁴²² Preamble and Resolutions Concerning Education adopted at the Baltimore Annual Conference in 1845. Daniel Payne. *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 182-183.

APPENDIX E⁴²³

PREAMBLE

Whereas, we have long viewed with the deepest solicitude the importance of providing for the instruction of the rising generation among us; and

Whereas, there is no institution accessible to our youth that meets our views of their wants; therefore,

Resolved, That the Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which met in the city of Columbus, state of Ohio, October 24th, 1845, feeling a deep interest in the moral and literary improvement of our youth, do devise a plan for the establishment of a seminary of learning for the dissemination of useful knowledge among us, on the manual labor system, for those who purpose entering into the ministry, and all others who may deem it to their interest to apply themselves to the cultivation of their minds in those branches of science that may be taught therein.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1. This seminary shall be known and styled “The Union Seminary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church,” subject to the Ohio Annual Conference.

ART. 2. The object of this Seminary shall be the education of those young men who purpose entering the ministry, and the improvement of our youth generally, both male and female, by instructing them in literature, science, agriculture and the mechanic arts.

ART. 3. The condition of admission into the Seminary shall be as the by-laws may from time to time prescribe.

ART. 4. The officers of the Seminary shall be a principal, a board of thirteen managers, nine trustees, a secretary and treasurer.

ART. 5. The officers of the Seminary shall hold their office for the term of one Conference year, by complying with the rules laid down in the by-laws for their government; but in case of failure to choose officers at the stated time, those in office shall continue till others are chosen by the Annual Conference.

ART. 6. The times of meeting, the times and the manner of choosing officers, their power and duties, the liabilities of its members, the causes that shall justify

⁴²³ Preamble and Constitution for the proposed Union Seminary School adopted at the Ohio Conference in 1845. Daniel Payne. *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 186-187.

dismembership, and generally the details of its organization shall be prescribed by the by-laws.

ART. 7. The funds of the institution shall be derived from the contributions, donations, legacies, scholarships, etc., and after the expenses shall be defrayed, any surplus that may be, shall not be appropriated to any other use or purpose than to aid the itinerant, superannuated and supernumerary preachers and Bishops belonging to this district.

Provided, nevertheless, That a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Annual Conference, at its session, shall be sufficient to alter or amend any of the above restrictions, except those clauses that would destroy the true interest and meaning of said institution, which shall not be altered.

Appendix F⁴²⁴

PREAMBLE

Whereas, the cause of education is of such vital importance to the interest of the Church in particular, and the work generally, that instead of being content with what little we have done, we feel it our bounden duty to make new and greater efforts to advance it in such a way as will result in the general diffusion of its blessings amongst our benighted race; therefore,

Resolved, That inasmuch as there is being established a high school⁴²⁵ in the western section of the Connection for our special benefit, we hereby constitute ourselves, who are members of this Convention, "A Parent Education Society," for the purpose of aiding poor, pious and talented young men in their preparation for the Gospel ministry in that institution, or such other institution as shall be selected by the persons hereinafter appointed for that purpose.

ARTICLE V.

Qualified candidates may be aided in each stage of preparatory education for the ministry; but, except in very singular cases, no applicant shall be assisted in the first stage who has not produced, from serious and respectable characters, unequivocal testimonials of his hopeful piety, promising talents and real diligence; nor shall any person be continued on this foundation whose instructor or instructors, except in very special cases,

⁴²⁴ Preamble and article five of the constitution adopted at a special convention held for the interest of education. Eighty-six delegates from the Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York conferences were present at Bethel Church in Philadelphia. Daniel Payne was present and called the convention to order; Bishop Brown was chosen the convention's president; Reverends J. Beulah, John Boggs, John Cornish, Israel Scott, William Davis, and Henry Davis were made vice-presidents; and the secretaries were Reverends Alexander Wayman and Joshua Woodlin. Daniel Payne. *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 187-188.

⁴²⁵ This was the projected Union Seminary of the Ohio Annual Conference.

shall not annually exhibit to the directors satisfactory evidence that in point of genius, diligence, literary progress, morals and piety, he is a proper character to receive aid from the sacred funds; in addition to which each beneficiary, after his admission to any college, shall annually exhibit to the directors a written declaration that it continues to be his serious purpose to devote his life to the Gospel ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

APPENDIX G⁴²⁶

Representative Richard H. Cain, responding on February 4, 1875, to the argument that racial tolerance can not be legislated:

Mr. Speaker, in the discussion of this question of the civil-rights bill, it has become a question of interest to the country how the colored people feel on this question of the schools. I believe, Sir, that there is no part of this bill so important as the school clause. The education of the masses is to my mind of vital moment to the welfare, the peace, the safety, and the good government of the Republic. Every enlightened nation regards the development of the minds of the masse as of vital importance. How are you going to elevate this large mass of people? What is the means to be employed? Is it not the development of their minds, the molding and fashioning of their intellects, lifting them up from intellectual degradation by information, by instruction? I know of no other means so well adapted to the development of a nation as education.

Especially is this true in the Southern States of this Union, where the great cry against the colored people is their ignorance. Admit it, Sir, and it is a lamentable fact that the past laws and customs and habits and interests of the Southern States have prevented the colored people from attaining that education which otherwise they would gladly have attained. It was a part and parcel of the system of slavery to prevent education; for the moment you remove ignorance and develop the minds of those who are enslaved the less likely they are to remain contentedly in servitude. For this reason it was the policy of the South to keep in ignorance that part of the community that they controlled for their benefit as their slaves. Now that there is a change throughout the land, now that these millions formerly enslaved are free, it is essential to the welfare of the nation that they should be educated.

But the question arises in the discussion of this bill, how and where are you to do this work? As a republican, and for the sake of the welfare of the republican party, I am willing, if we cannot rally our friends to those higher conceptions entertained by Mr. Sumner--if we cannot bring up the republican party to that high standard with regard to the rights of man as seen by those who laid the foundation of this Government--then I am willing to agree to a compromise. If the school clause is objectionable to our friends, and they think they cannot sustain it, then let it be struck out entirely. We want no invidious discrimination in the laws of this country. Either give us that provision in its entirety or else leave it out altogether, and thus settle the question.

⁴²⁶ Congressional Record, House, 43rd Cong., 1st sess. (February 3, 1875): 982.

I believe the time is coming when the good sense of the people of this country, democrats as well as republicans, will recognize the necessity of educating the masses. The more the people are educated the better citizens they make. If you would have peace, if you would have quiet, if you would have good will, educate the masses of the community. Objection is made to the ignorance of the colored people, and the State of South Carolina is cited as an illustration of that ignorance operating in legislation. Why, Sir, if it be true that the legislators of South Carolina are to some extent ignorant, I answer that it is not their fault; the blame lies at somebody else's door.

Now, Sir, let the democracy, instead of reproaching us with our ignorance, establish schools; let them guarantee to us school-houses in all the hamlets of the country; let them not burn them down, but build them up; let them not hang the teachers, but encourage and protect them; and then we shall have a great change in this country.

Sir, we must be educated. It is education that makes a people great. We are a part and parcel of this great nation, and are called upon to assume the responsibility of citizenship. We must have the appliances that make other people great. We must have school-houses and every appliance of education. If your objection is to guaranteeing to us in the civil-rights bill an equal enjoyment of school privileges, then I say surround us with all the other appliances; say nothing of the school-house if you choose, but enforce our rights under the law of the country, and we shall be enabled to exercise every other privilege in the community.

Mr. GUNCKEL. Let me ask the gentleman from South Carolina whether the colored people of the South want mixed schools.

Mr. CAIN. So far as my experience is concerned I do not believe they do. In South Carolina, where we control the whole school system, we have not a mixed school except the State college. In localities where whites are in the majority, they have two white trustees and one colored.

Mr. COBB, of Kansas. I desire to ask the gentleman what in his opinion will be the effect of the passage of the Senate civil-rights bill so far as regards the public-school system of the South.

Mr. CAIN. I believe that if the Congress of the United States will pass it and make it obligatory upon all the people to obey it and compel them to obey it, there will be no trouble at all.

Mr. KELLOGG. Would the gentleman prefer to retain the provision in regard to schools which I have moved to strike out in the House bill, or would he rather have that provision struck out according to my amendment.

Mr. CAIN. I agree to accept it.

Mr. KELLOGG. I offered it in the interest of your people as well as ours.

Mr. HYNES. Let me ask the gentleman a question, whether from his knowledge of the white and black people of the South he does not believe in every State controlled by the democratic party they would not abolish the school system rather than permit mixed schools? In other words, Mr. Speaker--

Mr. COX. Let me answer.

Mr. HYNES. I did not understand my friend to my left was from South Carolina. I ask my friend from South Carolina whether he does not believe that the prejudice against mixed schools in the South is not stronger in the minds of the white people there than their love for the public-school system?

Mr. CAIN. I do not know; I cannot judge of the democracy.

APPENDIX H ⁴²⁷

Succession of Principals, Professors and Teachers under the Auspices of the A.M.E. Church

From 1863 to 1865

Rt. Rev. Daniel A Payne, D.D. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary), President, Professor of Christian Theology, Mental Science, and Church Government
John G. Mitchell, A.M. (Oberlin), Professor of Greek, Latin, and Mathematics
Miss Esther T. Maltby, A.B. (Oberlin), Lady Principal, Matron, and Secretary of Faculty
Miss Fannie A. Mitchell (Oberlin), Assistant Teacher and head of Intermediate Department

From 1866 to 1868

Rt. Rev. Daniel A Payne, D.D. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary), President
John G. Mitchell, A.M. (Oberlin)
Rev. William Kent, M.D. (England), Professor of Natural Science
Theodore E. Suliot, A.M. (Edinburg, Scotland), Professor of Latin and French Literature, and Adjunct Professor Mathematics
Miss Sarah J. Woodson (Oberlin), Preceptress of English and Latin, and Lady Principal and Matron; Miss Woodson was succeeded by Miss Josephine Jackson, B.S. (Adrian, Mich.)

From 1868 to 1869

Rt. Rev. Daniel A Payne, D.D. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary), President
Henry C. Fry A.M. (Oberlin), Professor of Christian Theology
John Smith (Oberlin), Professor of Greek, Latin, and Mathematics
Mrs. Messenger succeeded Miss Josephine Jackson as Preceptress of English and Latin
Rev. Thomas H. Jackson, B.D. (Wilberforce University 1870 from the Theological Department), Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Homiletics and Pastoral Theology
William B. Adams, A.M. (Amherst), Professor of Greek Exegesis and Adjunct Professor of Mathematics
Dr. Wilson, Teacher of Hebrew and Hebrew Exegesis
Roswell Howard, A.M., B.L., Professor of Law

⁴²⁷ Daniel A. Payne, *The History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 430-432. The listing is not complete, but the reader gets the idea that the faculty came from a wide range of institutions as Daniel Payne began to build up the faculty ranks a Wilberforce.

Hon. John Little, Professor of Law

Mrs. Alice M. Adams (Holyoke), Lady Principal, Matron, and Teacher of English

From 1870 to 1876

Rt. Rev. Daniel A Payne, D.D. (Gettysburg Theological Seminary), President

Professor Jackson was succeeded by Rev. Benjamin F. Lee (Wilberforce University)

Benjamin K. Samson, A.M. (Oberlin) succeeded Professor Mortimer as Professor of
Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, and Secretary of Faculty

J.P. Shorter becomes the chair of the Classical Department

APPENDIX I⁴²⁸

Graduates from the Theological Department

Rev. John T. Jenifer, B.D.	1870
Rev. Thomas H. Jackson, B.D.	1870
Rev. Isaiah H. Welsh, B.D.	1870
Rev. Benjamin F. Lee, B.D.	1872
Rev. George T. Robinson, B.D.	1872
Rev. Charles E. Herbert, B.D.	1872
Rev. John W. Becket, B.D.	1872
Rev. Henry A. Knight, B.D.	1875
Rev. John Coleman, B.D.	1875
Rev. John G. Yeiser, B.D.	1876
Rev. George C. Whitfield, B.D.	1876

Classical Department

Mr. Joseph P. Shorter, A.B.	1871
Mr. Samuel T. Mitchell, A.B.	1873
Mr. Alexander D. Delaney, A.B.	1873
Miss Julia A. Shorter, A.B.	1873
Miss Mary E. Davis, A.B.	1874
Mr. Samuel R. Bailey, A.B.	1874
Mr. Andrew T. Bowles, A.B.	1876

Normal Department

Miss Almira Copeland, B.E.	1873
Miss Virginia Copeland, B.E.	1873
Miss Maggie E. Crabbe, B.E.	1873
Miss Carrie L. Jenkins, B.E.	1873
Miss Ella J. Green, B.E.	1873
Miss Elizabeth W. Baker, B.E.	1876

⁴²⁸ Daniel A. Payne. *The History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 430-431.

Scientific Department

Miss Lottie P. Harris, B.S.	1872
Miss Hallie Q. Brown, B.S.	1873
Miss Mary E. Ashe, B.S.	1875
Miss Ella Z. Jenkins, B.S.	1875
Miss Zelia R. Ball, B.S.	1874