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CONTENTS

THE ABIEL ABBOT JOURNALS
A YANKEE PREACHER IN CHARLESTON SOCIETY, 1818-1827 *

EDITED BY JOHN HAMMOND MOORE

(*Continued from April*)

Nov. 27 [1818]. Under the conduct of Mr. Abm. Motte visited the City Hospital. It is a commodious rather than an elegant establishment.[1] It is roomy—has a garden, & parterre—paved yards & promenades, balconies & piazzas—well scoured & airy apartments—& cells for maniacs well contrived for solitude & the admission of sweet air— In the latter it is regarded as a misfortune for which a remedy is desired that the maniacs can converse by putting their heads thro a slip door & thus become so far visible to each other. By this means the lucid intervals of some are disturbed by the frenzy of the rest & their progression to sanity interrupted.

Maniacs, 7 women, 8 men, & two recovered. Among the unfortunate women was a small & not inelegant French lady who improved her time, when more regular in mind, in the finest kind of needle work. Her reason fell a victim to some of the atrocities in St. Domingo. She lost her husband, child & reason together. There was a melting sweetness & wildness in her tone, as she spake, intimating to the stranger that she knew the extent of her misfortunes & made her appeal to his unavailing sympathy.

Another female permitted to range over the pavement this fine morning was a subject for a painter that might wish to collect into a group the features of affliction, of frenzy, of fatuity. Upon her person was displayed as many tattered & coloured ornaments as the cast garments & baubles of the Hospital could furnish. Red was the prevailing color, hanging in shreds from her head & waist. She moved with a jaunty & disordered step about the yard & gave a prompt answer to every question addressed to her—in which was mingled reason & frenzy in equal parcels. She spake of the grave as of a resting place—where she wished to be because she should lose the sense of her sufferings. I guarded her against the wish of death, by reminding her of the vital spark in her bosom— "So much the better for me," she said, "with quickness." Yet relapsed into confused expressions about the oblivion of the grave & expressing her hope she should soon be there. She was called Hannah Eliza.

* The engraving of the Rev. Abiel Abbot, which is reproduced facing this page, was found among the Abbot Papers at Harvard's Houghton Library.

[1] The City Hospital, located on Mazyck Street, was originally St. Philip's Hospital under the auspices of St. Philip's Parish.

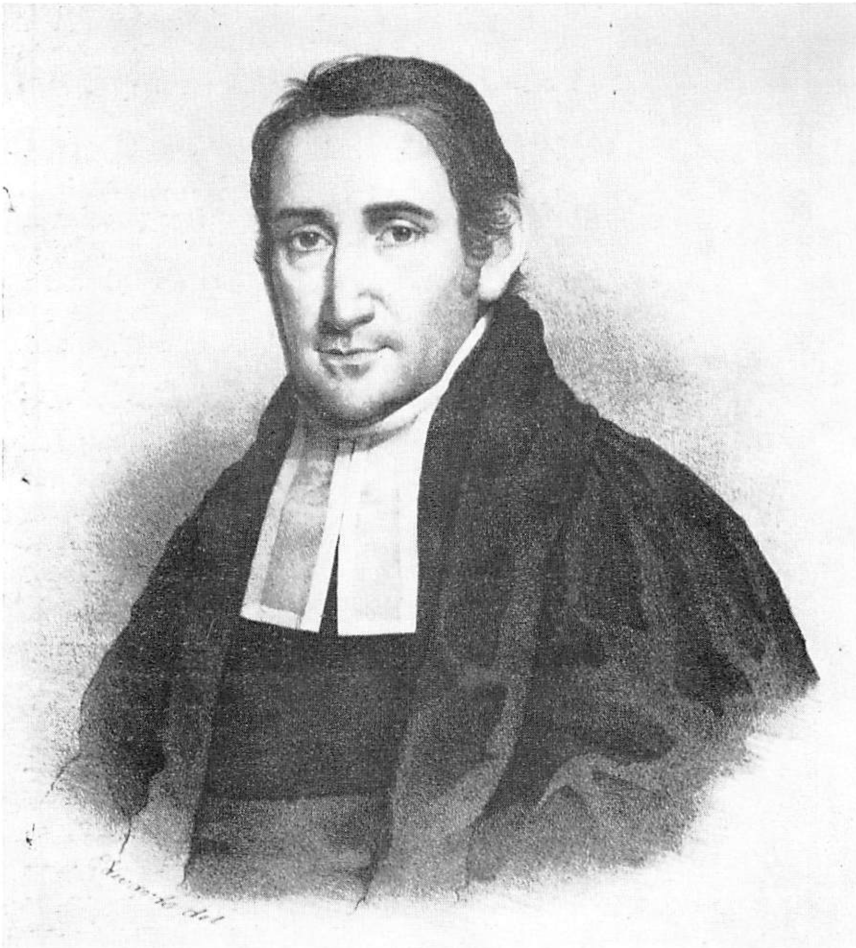
My eye was powerfully struck by another faded countenance connected with an elegant form. In the coarse costume & scanty, with which she was inveloped, regard seemed to have been had to the great point, formerly so much consulted, the exhibition of her fine proportions. She had been *beautiful & frail.* And could the gay & thoughtless in moments of temptation but extend their prospect down to the termination of the vista they are rashly entering, they would start back with curdling horrour.

The door of a cell which we approached stood wide open, & upon a little heap of straw sat a negro with a full length beard, a broad hat over his eyes, in a fatuity so perfect that the ingenuity of the Dr. was insufficient to rouse his attention.[2] He had been the favorite negro of a wealthy master—attended to his money accounts, drew his checks on the Bank & received the money, & was to him almost as a son. At the death of his master he became free & rich by the generous & grateful legacy of his master. But he seems not to have been able long to enjoy his happiness, affording a new evidence of the truth often proclaimed that prosperity is more difficult to be supported with an equal mind than adversity.

Several other maniacs were too hideous in their appearance to be subjects of investigation. In the last cell we found by far the most interesting of the whole pitiable group. George Duff had been a soldier I think of the revolutionary army; a pock-broken Irishman. At the voice of Dr. Logan, he popt out his head thro the door in his cell, & waving it up & down, like a Chinese mandarin on a chimney piece, & to the right & left, all the while chattering most incoherently, he ans'd the Dr.'s questions in fine words, always running on, incapable of remaining silent. He often spent hours in giving words of command, like a petty officer. There appears to be entertained no hope of his ever arriving in this life to a lucid interval. For some serious misdemeanor, he & another were tried by court martial & sentenced to be shot. The army was paraded for the execution, & the file of men discharged upon his fellow prisoner only, while a pardon was read to him at the awful moment when he was expecting untimely death. The shock of mercy was too great & sudden, & reason was extinguished in a moment.

A boy was shown to us in whose singular case time was about equally divided between reason & insanity. And two persons [who] were considered as perfectly restored to reason. One of them, an old man of 70,

[2] Dr. George Logan (1778-1861), a Charleston native, was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. Especially interested in pediatrics, in 1825 he published *Practical Observations on Diseases of Children.* Physician at the Orphan House for some four decades, he moved to New Orleans in 1854 where he died seven years later.



Rev. Abiel Abbot

had been a considerable personage in his day. Several of the living languages were familiar to him, & he attempted to converse with me in Latin with tollerable success. There were some incongruities in grammar. The ruin of this man's prospects was probably effected by the cup. Near him was standing a fine, ingenuous looking man, whom I took for a keeper. His countenance was certainly of the first order for sobriety & well marked with good sense. I was astonished to hear the Dr. address him, as now perfectly recovered, to which he very cordially assented. As he appeared well disposed to converse on the subject, I asked him the cause of his recent misfortune. He replied at once, *Drink.* Highly gratified with his ingenuousness, I observed more than half of the maniacs in the land might ascribe their frenzy to the same cause. "Doubtless," he added. "Well," said I, "if you do go again into the world & approach the haunts of danger, are you not apprehensive that your reason will again become the martyr of your appetite?" "O no," said he, "I hope not— I design immediately to leave this place & as soon as possible to obtain regular employ't further to the North. The name of this gent. was Flannagan.

In the sunny yard we saw a half dozzen of chronic invalids taking the air & sun in comfortable habits & indulging the hope soon to go abroad. We next visited the principal building, in which were many apartments for the sick & convalescents, male & female, aged & young, & blind. Some of the objects were wretched enough, lame & halt, & maimed, & scorbutic, landsmen & seamen, the imprudent & the unfortunate, rich men become poor & hale men sick, & sick men again hale & looking for the moment when they should again sally into the world & mingle in its active scenes. The most interesting object in this whole establishment was a youth of genteel figure & of fair & amiable countenance, entirely & hopelessly blind, about 21 years of age. I drew up to him with the accents of sympathy & consolation. He responded in a manner grateful & serious. "My misfortune," said he, "is indeed great, to be shut out from the light of the world. But Jesus can give me light & spiritual discernment to know my Savior—& that is the best of all." He appears a youth of piety—& listens to some less afflicted companion while he reads the gospel & improves himself at other times in meditation on the passages laid up in his mind in the days of his childhood. I know not how long he has been afflicted; he lost his eyes in an attempt to quench a running fire in the forest. I trust Providence will yet give him something to do.

We visited the flower garden of the hospital & looked into their enclosure, cultivated with culinary vegetables, in which salads, turnips, & cabbages at this season most abound, not forgetting, however, their

Tamatas, which sell in this market with great constancy & are a capital ingredient in their very best beef soups. This city is quite famous for its soups & for raising the savoury vegetables which give their flavor. The ocara is perhaps the most celebrated, a tall plant with a flower not unlike the holly hawk & a pod not very dissimilar to the bean.

In the Hospital the whole No. of pensioners is about 114.

With great kindness Dr. Logan proffered his services to conduct me to see the Negro Penitentiary—time immemorial called the *Sugar House.*[3] This is a state establishment composed of a strong building, as a gaol, with barred doors under bolts & keys, with a turnkey to every apartment on the outside & a driver with his whip on the inside, with a back yard surrounded by a high and safe fence, furnished with three hand mills, a cooperage, back-house & cook room, &c., &c.

The laboring negros in the yard did not exceed 13, 4 to two mills each, 3 to one, & two in the cooperage. The mill is to me a novelty, tho familiarly seen on the plantations. It is constituted of a large firm tub & a pair of stones about 2 feet in diameter. To the edge nearly of the upper stone is fixed in a perforation a pole, about 3 In. in diameter & about 6 feet long. The upper end of the pole is fixed in a hole in a plank over head lying parallel to the stones. Thus prepared, four negroes grasp the pole with a right hand & give it a circular motion rapidly, while one of the four with a left hand feeds the hopper. The grits or hominee falls into a tub & is the principal, I believe, the whole sustenance of the prisoners.

The whole number of negros in this african gaol are 100, 18 of whom are females. The females were in two apartments, in one of which some pains were taken, or pretended, to teach them work. They wrought a little with a needle, but in general the 87 might be called stupidly idle. The apartments were large & airy. If any of them were sick, the family physician of their masters attends them; or otherwise the Hospital Surgeon prescribes & the bill is paid by the owner. About 20 of these poor creatures were in a room, generally sitting in rows round the apartment in profound silence, preserved in that state probably by the terror of the lash constantly brandishing, seldom, I believe, felt.

In the women's apartment were seen several females that might be called beautiful; probably vanity, conceit, & imprudence, a common compound, had lead them into such manners as made correction necessary— Impertinence, obstinancy, petulance are feminine faults for which the blacks feel the lash or suffer confinement; & their fairer sisters are punished by coldess, alienation, & rebuke. I saw the queen of the group

[3] The Sugar House was located near the site of the old Roper Hospital.

standing by a window, tall & fair, round featured & elegantly proportioned, black as a sloe, & with eyes as brilliant as illuminate a fairer complexion. Half ashamed, yet half on a titter, she surveyed us & looked out at the window. It was sufficient to tell her whole story.

In one of the apartments, the best fortified in the gaol, were the crew of a privateer seized by public authority because probably smuggled into the country for sale, under the pretence of being the crew of said vessel. They were sons of Anak, not one I should judge less than 6 feet high, & some I doubt not six feet 4 In.[4] Robert Arnold fellows.[5] Their faces were tatooed & their accent such as betokened a recent arrival from Guinea.

My attention, in another apartment, was drawn to an interesting black, & I asked him the cause of his confinement— "Because," said he, "I would not live in Columbia." "And why, pray, would you not live in Columbia?" "Because I have a *companion* in this city & two children— Yes & because I am *married according to the church.*" (Seeing me habited as a clergyman.) Poor fellow. "You should have told these things to the gent. who bought you," said Dr. L. "I did, Sir," said he, "but he would not give me up & I ran away."

There was much of nature in this black & great inhumanity in his simple story, doubtless substantially true—as there are hundreds of cases of the kind continually occurring. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise when the poor fellows are exposed on the auction table to the highest bidder, let him live in town or country. The hammer falls, regardless of the charities of a family, & rends those ties wantonly, which are never severed even by the merciful hand of providence without bleeding. It is shocking to an Eastern heart, to stand by & see the sale of a lot of blacks. 15 minutes looking & listening was enough for me. It awakens feelings unutterable, yet I was continually in danger of attempting their utterance in a crowd who would have turned upon me with contempt & indignation. A poor old woman, at least 60, was made to stand up in a chair, to tell what she could do, to allure the purchasers. Her words were few & modest, but her feelings were uttered by the nervous convulsion of her countenance. A smile of gratitude lighted up her face as she dropped out of the chair, repurchased into the family of her late master. They, better than strangers, knew her value.

[4] Anak, according to the Old Testament, was progenitor of a tribe or race of giants.

[5] Beverly (Mass.) records reveal that a "Robert Arnold" was born in that town in 1801, son of Robert and Flora F. Arnold. Abbot probably refers here to the father, son, or both.

Several young men were sold—& were obliged to recommend themselves by attitudinizing—leaping, walking, & displaying their bones & sinues to advantage.—But I forget that I am at the Sugar House. Here I saw two fine young fellows in appearance, except that they had somewhat the air of profligates of a fairer skin. I asked one of them, as they sat as friends side by side, for what fault he was confin'd. "Fighting, Sir," was the reply. "Ah, that is poor business—& you see that you get more kicks than coppers by it." "And what were *you* confined for," addressing his companion—"For the same fault—fighting." "Were you fighting with each other?" "Oh, no, *for* each other," they replied. Two days afterwards these young men were taken to the market place and received chastisement in the presence of an immense crowd. Similar measures, I think, would break up the custom of fighting among the whites.

The whole number of persons confined in this negro gaol is 100, partly from the country. Surely this does not savor greater proneness to crimes in the blacks than in the whites, if we throw open our several state Penitentiaries & count the convicts & add to the number the prisoners in our county gaols. A great deduction, too, is to be made from this single hundred, by considering the faults for which probably half or three quarters of them are in confinement—such as would be regarded in white persons as no faults at all, or a decent expression of spirit, or peccadillos to be settled by reproof or domestic correction. On the whole, the Negro Penitentiary (for so do I prefer to call it rather than adopt the language of the city—*Sugar House or Gaol*—as my own term conveys to Northern ears a juster notion of the establishment) is rather a monument of the decent morals & manners of the blacks in this city & state, than of their depravity. It is also, I do believe, an evidence of the humane treatment which they receive from their masters, even in cases of obstinacy, sulkiness, & palpable vice. The matron, by this establishment, preserves the respect of her servants & their fidelity without the pain of hearing the lash sound or of wasting her lungs with continual & unavailing reproof. They know their destiny—& Sugar House is a watchword that recals them to the path & softens the ferocity of their manners & renders them alert & faithful. It is salutary terror, commonly sufficient to prevent correction altogether—and, if at any time something more is necessary, it is correction in mildness & without passion. The rash hand of an enraged master is not lifted over the defenceless head of his slave. He has time to deliberate before the black is sent to the stocks. He is not needlessly sent, because he is wanted at home & for the same reason he is not kept in prison an unreasonable time— His services & the expence of his maintenance in the gaol are a check to passion & all malignity, if felt, in the owners. And what is the correction when felt in its utmost latitude? The number of stripes may not exceed 20, except there be a *civil* crime in the case. The whip such as I examined in the prison is a mere riding stick. But it is not usually the case that the whip is applied at all for faults committed before confinement—*never* except at the request of the owner, & not then except a distinct fee be paid. The punishment, then, is usually "durance vile" & hard living & little exercise. They are fed coarsely on grits, are preserved from conversation & all amusement & even the pleasures of labor except so much as is indispensable to keep them in health. These circumstances constitute a mild but effectual punishment. The contrast of living on the rich relics of their masters' tables & living on cracked corn—or ranging the streets, saluting their companions, visiting their wives, caressing their children, & the dull silence & solitude to which they are condemned in the midst of a crowd answers the end—they shudder at the thought of the Sugar House—they enter it with reluctance—they show early signs of repentance, & after a week or fortnight's confinement return humble, supple, grateful & rejoicing to their masters.

This negro gaol is said to furnish the most lucrative office in the state. The Intendant (master) gives to the city a thousand dollars for the use of the premises.

To pay his rents & receive a proper compensation he has 31¼ cts. for turning the key & 25 cts. for every correction & 18¾ cts. for his subsistence per diem. There may be other perquisites of which I did not hear. The result of the whole is a handsome sum of money to the Int't, & a quiet city, an accommodated country, well regulated families, & the mutual comfort, in fact, of blacks & whites.

A calculation of the facts. The expenses of the Intendant (master).[6]

The subsistence of 100 blacks on grits, ground in the prison at 1.00 per bushel, one quart per man per diem is	$	3.01
The rent per diem		2.74
Help may be selected from the prisoners at		1.00
Total expenses	$	6.75[7]

Income of the Intendant (master).

By board of 100 blacks at 18¾ cts. per diem	$	18.75

[6] The intendant of the Sugar House was AE. S. Reeves.

[7] Abbot added this footnote: "I since understand that the help & sustinence probably cost nothing, being paid for by the toll of these mills which supply the city with hominy."

By key twice turned for each in a fortnight at 6 per day	4.43
By the lash, applied first or last to one half, is, per diem	1.10
	$ 24.28
	6.75
For the Intend't (master) Per day	$ 17.53
Do Do per ann.	$6,398.45

Some improvements doubtless might be made on this admirable establishment. A law of the State might abolish private chastizement & carry every case to the Sugar House, & thus take it out of the hands of those who, in the moment of passion, feel power over a fellow creature & forget right. It would be a humane provision, worthy of an enlightened state. By the same law, the penitentiary might be humanely regulated, crimes & punishment defined & limited with equity & precision, & greater reliance might be rested on the effect of diet & silence & somewhat less on the lash. A more mild & ingenuous treatment of the blacks would gradually improve their moral feelings & render them better men & more faithful servants. And the dwellings of their masters would become more peaceful, the examples before their children less pernicious, & the whole population far more virtuous & happy.

Private punishments, it is a well known fact, are incomparably the most severe & least effectual. A poor fellow in a stable opposite to my chamber received, according to my best judgment without having counted them, from 30 to 50 lashes; not with a driver's whip, such as before described, but with the long handle & lash of a coachman's whip. The echo resounded to the end of the street & was sufficient to cut in twain the heart of feeling. Not a groan, nor a motion from the fellow—he moved not a limb, except when bidden, after receiving about half the number, he walked from the barn to the street, probably to afford space to a more ample swing of the lash & a firmer jerk of the handle.

Another instance of abusive chastizement was narrated to me by a cool, judicious friend, a witness to the whole. The servant was left in the chair to take care of the horse while his master made a visit of hours in a friend's house. The horse was quiet, & the black fell asleep, & in this posture was surprised by his master & beaten without mercy—beaten till the whipper was fatigued to quietness. He then instantly drove with his bleeding boy to the Sugar House. My friend, apprehending what he intended & satisfied that correction beyond the fault was already administered, hastened to the spot, just as the wretched boy was extended by his hands & feet, according to custom, to receive chastizement. He whispered to the Intendant & took him aside—stated the abuse the child had already received—& conjured him to forbear. The Intendant, a humane man, & obliged to execute the order of the owner, expostulated with him, but in vain; the tempest of passion had not yet subsided. After a further consultation between the philanthropists, the Intendant resolved to avail himself of a regulation that if a black committed to his custody appeared to be *not well* he might delay the correction till he was recovered & peremptorily he refused then to chastize him. The master ultimately consented to the delay. In a few weeks the more tranquil master thanked my friend for his timely interference with much feeling.

The administration of *civil* justice among the blacks is summary & I should think a perfect novelty in jurisprudence. They are in no shape, if I understand it, admitted to the regular courts, neither by oath nor by indictment. But an accused black is tried by a justice as his judge & by two white men as his jury. Their sentence is final.[8]

Nove. 29. Sab. Worshipped at St. Michael's in the morning. The Bishop performed service.[9] Two or three chaunts were performed & pretty well; performers all over the house & not sufficient power in the orchestra to lead with precision. This occasioned some confusion. The hymns were sung somewhat better. The congregation full, serious, attentive. The Bp. was solemn in reading the liturgy & with devotional interest. The sermon was solid & respectable, rising out of Isaiah I. 3. "Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." He illustrated the duty of religious consideration, showing that it implied serious reflection on God as a Creator, Law giver, & Benefactor, & careful investigation of one's self, to see whether we had conducted suitably to our relations with him. And 2^{ly} he exhibited the fruits of consideration— That it tended to promote a conversion from sin to God & holiness—& to prepare a man to conduct suitably to his duties in life & his prospects beyond the grave.

Near the close he urged the duty upon his hearers with great solemnity & earnestness. And with fine effect singled an inconsiderate individual who would not be persuaded to the duty & addressed in the following manner— "Well, then, sleep on now, & take your rest—immerse yourself in the world, & refuse to reflect—But, the time is coming when think you must— When you feel the alarm of sickness or the stroke of

[8] Abbot added a note to check whether such sentences could be appealed, and, in a second footnote, he pointed out that the remainder of his 1818 diary was not entered day by day, but sometimes after the events described had transpired.

[9] Nathaniel Bowen (1779-1839), a native of Boston, was the third Episcopal bishop of South Carolina from 1818 to 1839.

death—you will be roused to reflection. Not to think of a smiling God, but of God frowning upon you & ready to banish you into outer darkness—not ready to receive you to the light & bliss of heaven, but to consign you to perpetual night & wo & despair." His talents are respectable, his manner solemn, his gestures few & graceful; his sentiments general & expressed with care & measured periods, rather than peculiarly appropriate to his subject & eloquently expressed. The mitre has probably been placed on the right head. He is about 42, a little grey & thin faced. In conversation he appeared catholic to other sects & expressed disapprobation of the proselyting spirit of Epis'ns in Con't.

Nov. 27.[10] Called at Mr. F[rancis] Motte's—a pleasant visit in the morning—at Mr. Sturgis, he & lady out—two strangers at home. At two called to dine at Mr. Russell's—present, Dr. Palmer, Mr. Reed, Mr. Storrs, Mr. Haddock, & Mrs. Middleton, an elegant & animated dr. of Mr. R.'s.[11] Examined the garden again—delighted with the flowers— A handsome dinner—dispersed after it dif't ways.

In the evening accepted Mr. Grimké's invitation to the feast of wine & fruits of mind. I found him with one friend at a full spread table— As others came in they were introduced to the stranger—& seated at the table, which became filled with the following gentlemen—Messrs. King, Gadsden, ————, lawyers; Mr. Morse, the painter; Dwight & Dagget of Con't.[12]

The sensual entertainment was frugal, yet pleasant, consisting of exotic & indigenous fruits, pruns, raisins, almonds, banannas, apples, &c., & wine & cordials. But the entertainment was chiefly intellectual. On the subject of painting Mr. Morse was interesting—gave us anecdotes of G. W. Alston—his unusual success—his visit to the Louvre at Paris—his hope & ambition fired—his bold attempt in six weeks— His Uriel, or angel in the Sun, success at the exhibition—consequent patronage—the friendship of a marquis—dinner—committee soliciting him to continue in Eng. & his plans in America.[13] On the subject of painting K. & G. distinguished— The subject subsiding, Mr. M. silent. The conversation became engrossed by four—ranged over the most interesting literary

[10] Although dated "November 27," this should read Nov. 30.

[11] Alicia Hopton Russell, who died in 1840, married Arthur Middleton (1785-1837) in 1809.

[12] Mitchell King (1783-1862) was a prominent lawyer with offices at 66 Meeting Street. John Gadsden (1787-1831), a Yale graduate, was a brother of Bishop Gadsden. Samuel F. B. Morse (1791-1872) spent the winters of 1818-1821 in Charleston where he won his initial acclaim as an artist.

[13] For Washington Allston (1779-1843) see this *Magazine*, LXVII (April 1966), 84-98.

ground—Johnson's Boswell— That great man's faults & virtues— His piety I remembered was too occasional—almost confined to red letter days of his year—1st Jan., birthday, Tetty's birthday & obituary—25th of Dec.[14] Even seasons of com[munio]n were not quite marked enough always to secure his attendance—& sometimes when he did attend, it was with much misgiving as he was too fresh from scenes not very accordant with religious duties—sitting up till midnight to usher in the new year with his orisons, while he felt no great uneasiness at the wide chasms in his piety & the weeks & months which passed indevoutly— Referred to his book of private devotions, resolutions, & reflections, which the gent. had not seen, as even exemplyfing both the ardor & the desultoriness of his piety— In remarking on great men, Mr. K. observed with singular emphasis that Buonaparte was a prodigiously *great* man. Mr. G. thought that the terms must be considerably qualified to be just— that he was great by the accidental posture of circumstances in which he was placed & that the inherent qualities of *greatness* were more superficial than was generally thought. Mr. K. repeated that he was a *great* man— That he would not so much appeal to his successful military career as to the *Code Napoleon*— That this was a most astonishing work—unequalled in jurisprudence—& an unperishable monument of this greatness. Both of the Mr. G.'s thought the work great, but not greater than the immortal Blackstone's. Besides, said Mr. Gé., the merit such as it is, is but partially his; it is the joint production of the first jurists in France. From every department in the empire he assembled the most powerful minds & learned lawyers & required of them distinct reports on the respective subjects & points—& a select number digested these again into a single report with all the authorities, which was submitted to the Emperor who had the subject in the smallest imaginable compass before him, when little remained for him to do & probably little was done but to add his signature. "So far are these circumstances from affecting his praise," said Mr. King, "that they in reality demonstrate him the great man. They show that he devised the best possible way of doing the thing & that in this way he did it." This position of Mr. K. I thought very just; & it would be as improper to derogate from his praise on account of the aid he received, as from the glory of Solomon, on account of Hiram . . . & a host of artizans, designers, & laborers which no man could number that aided him in construction of the most perfect edefice the world ever saw. I ventured, however, to object to the title of Napoleon to be considered a *great man* on a very different ground— That true greatness implied *moral* qualities—the pursuit of *great ends* by *right*

[14] "Tetty," a provincial form of Betty, was Samuel Johnson's familiar name for his wife.

means— That no man was more contemptuously negligent of the latter— That personal elevation thro his whole career was his single object— What masses of his countrymen he expended in battle he as little regarded as the powder & shot, so long as the conscripted population could renew the mown ranks, as readily as the pillaged property of his subjects could replenish the exhausted caissons— As he disregarded the frantic lamentations of French widows & orphans, so the sacking of other cities, the desolation of other countries, the crash of governments & the destruction of civil order throughout Europe were the objects of his ferocious mind— A man so purely selfish I could not insert in my list of great men— "But, Sir," said Mr. K. with a benign and yet emphatic manner, "a man may be a *great villain*—" True, Sir, it was replied, but a great villain is never a *great man*. In predicating greatness of man, it must imply goodness— Natural talents constitute but half of this Corinthian column; & it is only when the moral constituents are enjoined, as in our own Washington, that it is complete & can stand to future time commanding respect & admiration.

Various other subjects were touched with much point & good sense, with classick taste, allusions & quotations, chaste humour & wit. My health required me to resign the pleasures of this select & accomplished circle at an early hour in the evening.

The story of Mr. King I have piecemeal from several hands. He was born in Scotland; and, discovering talent, at 16 years of age his father determined to breed him a physician. For this purpose he was placed with a gentleman to prosecute the preparatory studies. The young man conceived a violent dislike to the tutor on account of some meanness of spirit discovered in him and refused to remain there. He was next in a counting house in Prussia; & thence for reasons not known, he went to sea & was carried captive into Spain where he was two years in confinement, & was near losing his life, making his escape over the flat roofed houses. I next hear of him in Malta, at which place he saw the American squadron, it being at the time of our war with the Regency of Algiers. He speaks of the squadron as affording one of the sublimest & most beautiful sights he had ever seen. As the squadron warped out of the Bay, the walls, the tops of the houses, & every height that could command the view was filled with people; and as they were winding round the bluff & just ready to disappear, the spectators gave a shout & cheer that rent the air again.

It is probable that the young adventurer was led to think of America as a place of residence by this specimen of its naval power, then highly respected throughout the Mediterranean.

In Charleston he brought himself into notice by a poem published in a city paper. Of this I am promised a sight. Dr. Buist was at that time the scholar of the city & esteemed the most eloquent preacher & was at the head of the city College.[15] The poem attracted his eye—he discovered a germ of genius, worthy of his care in expanding. It was also no objection in the mind of that Scotch divine that the young man was his countryman. He admitted him into college as a teacher. A young gentleman, Mr. Simmonds, who was a pupil at that time, remarked to me that his costume when he entered the college was outré & not adapted to conciliate the respect of the boys.[16] He wore a dingy white hat with the crown like a sugar loaf & pinched up with much use, with which the rest of his habit accorded. They very soon learned to respect his talents & found him an admirable instructor. The teacher was the most rapid in his improvements & during his residence in the institution became an adept in Greek & Roman literature & formed an acquaintance with the English classics, which is likely to distinguish him above most others both in his conversation & professional career. He is at present eminent as a counsellor & punctual collector of money rather than as a barrister.

Thro weakness & inflamation of eyes, I am oblidged to omit a particular record of several dinner parties, at which I met interesting & cultivated men, whose conversation was worth preserving. On the 3d of Dec'r I dined with Dr. Manning & his delightful dr., my admirable fellow passenger from N. E. It was an Essex *Thanksgiving dinner;* & the rich variety of meats & pastry revived our recollections of that grateful festival in the bosom of our families; &, with an interval of a thousand miles between us and our native State, we seemed to hold communion with them on the pious & joyful occasion.

The party was chiefly from Essex, wholly from Massachusetts, except one gentleman, Dr. Tidyman, to whom we were indebted for no small share of our intellectual entertainment.[17] The education of the Dr. had been chiefly in Edinborough. He took his degrees, however, in Goettengen & enjoyed the advantage of a residence in Paris & of observation in its hospitals. At present he is a gentleman physician & a planter by profession. He read us a letter from Mr. Lowndes, member of Congress,

[15] George Buist (1770-1808), a native of Scotland who came to Charleston in 1793 to fill the pulpit of the Scotch (First) Presbyterian Church, was for some years president of the College of Charleston. In a footnote Abbot states, "This divine was an admirer of Mrs. Izard, then the belle of S. C."

[16] Edward Peter Simons (1794-1823), born at Rice Hope in Georgetown District, attended Yale following his classes under Buist and King.

[17] Philip Tidyman (1776-1850), planter and physician, owned land near the mouth of the Santee River.

in which was little more than an announcement of the president's message. Dr. Manning appears to be respected in this place & well established in his business. He converses sensibly, but has considerable of what Gov. Brooks called the Puritan peculiarity—hesistancy—chasm—interrupted utterance.[18] In the time of the Revolutionary war, Charles Lee[19] was a little severe on Col. Brooks, exclaiming, "Pray tell me, Sir, why you & all the yankees find so much difficulty in uttering yourselves? You hem & haw, & stutter & drawl the longest while, before we can find out what you would say." "Why, Sir," said the Col., "you know very well that we are descendants of the English Puritans & very naturally preserve their manners. Now surrounded as they were by the spies of Laud & of the High Commission Court, which made them offenders for a word, they studied caution—looked round them before they spake at all & even then took out their words & examined them before they gave them utterance. And, if something of this Puritan discretion were seen in the Virginian character, it would not suffer by it."

On the following day I dined with Hugh Paterson Esq. in company with Rev. Mr. Henry, Professor Elect of Moral Philosophy in Columbia College in this State, Mr. Simmonds, & a Philadelphian lady. This is a very friendly & affectionate family. To Mr. H. & Mr. S., however, I was most indebted for intellectual entertainment. Mr. H. is a fine scholar, having spent 11 years in Scotland for his education. Since his return he has preached in the French Protestant Church. He has not been as acceptable as his talents & acquirements may reasonably have led him to expect. For a time he was obliged to preach in French; this was a disadvantage which talents could not countervail. As a preacher his manner is monotonous & heavy. In conversation he is spirited, various, full of point, vivacity, & wit. His talents will be better estimated in the College; and, if he should eclipse Maxcy, it will be no matter of surprise to me, if I can fairly judge of the President's talents by some of his Providence publications.[20]

Mr. S. is a young lawyer & son-in-law of Mr. Paterson. Of all the graduates of Yale College whom I have seen, he most resembles in voice, manner, & impetuosity of conversation his great tutor & exemplar, Dr.

[18] John Brooks (1752-1825), a veteran of the American Revolution, was the ninth governor of Massachusetts. He was elected for six successive terms, 1816-1822.

[19] Charles Lee (1758-1815), a Virginian, was attorney general under Presidents Washington and Adams and also one of the famous "midnight" appointments of the latter.

[20] Jonathan Maxcy (1768-1820), a Massachusetts native, and a graduate of Brown, was president of South Carolina College, 1804-1820.

Dwight.[21] His talents are very considerable & his utterance without the least embarrassment. Some smaller slips may be fairly imputed to his youth; & being ambitious & indefatigable & in vigorous health, he may be eminent. He appears to me to have studied the negro character with attention & candor & assures me they are not destitute of fine feeling of gratitude & attachment. He spake with great feeling of a black nurse, who served in that capacity in his grandfather's & his father's family & who is now nursing in his own. He observes that in many families the same families of blacks continue from generation to generation. They grow up not merely as the servants, but as the humble friends of the whites. A little boy is given to a little white master to take care of him, keep him out of danger, & minister to his wants & pleasures. A mutual attachment springs up between them; & the young master always reserves a portion of his delicacies, his apple or orange, his nuts & raisins to treat his servant. Similar attachments are formed among other members of the white & black family. The disparity is not forgotten on either side; while from gentleness on the one part & fidelity on the other, they find their several interests promoted. Mr. Paterson reposes unlimited confidence in his servants & never has found it abused. While with his family he was spending a little time in the country, a disastrous fire broke out in that part of the city where his valuable property lay, entrusted entirely to the care of his servants. His house was the only one in the neighborhood that was rescued from the flames, and all his household furniture & valuables had been removed to a place of safety & not an article was missing when they were returned.

Mr. Simmonds speaks of Judge Cheves as a character of great talent & merit. He sprung up out of obscurity & obtained his early education by personal exertions chiefly. On entering the profession of law, he observed to Mr. S. with great emphasis he was *miserably* poor. He was many months without business. In order to attract notice, if possible, he & another poor brother combined their little stock of hired money to purchase a horse & chair. They went the rounds; & he by great good fortune obtained so much business at one of the sessions as to pay his board. But on returning to Charleston, he was in the utmost distress as the time of payment for his hired money drew near, & he had not a dollar. From this embarrassment he was extricated by an offer for the useless carriage he had on hand.—

Mr. Cheves was probably somewhat longer in his obscurity on account of his extreme modesty. Even in advanced years, he seldom if

[21] Well-known Congregational divine and author, Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) was president of Yale, 1795-1817.

ever commences a speech or plea without visible embarrassment. He warms & glows as he progresses & soon becomes self-possessed & eloquent. It was not long before the sagacious Mr. Peace, a respectable attorney & collector, but who seldom if ever spake at the bar, discerned his talents & admitted him to partnership.[22] His fortune was at once made. His fine talents were continually occupied at the bar, & the income of the firm became enormous—10, 20 thousand dollars per ann. His talents at the present moment & his integrity are in the highest estimation. Party is silent in regard to him. It is devoutly hoped in this place that he will be appointed President of the U. S. Bank, thinking that the measure would conciliate the utmost confidence from the public in the institution.[23]

From another source of unquestionable respectability & veracity the above particulars are confirmed & the following ascertained. Judge Langdon Cheves was born in Abbeville District, S. C. His father was a Scotch pedler among the Indians of that part of the state & reproached for his impotent immoralities among their women. By his first wife he had no children. Obtaining a little property, he became a small planter & married a girl for his second wife with a few negros. After living with her two years, preferring his business as a travelling merchant, he employed a likely young man as his overseer & was blessed with this fine boy, his first & only child.[24]

When the war broke out, he was a tory & fled with others to England for compensation for his loyalty. Returning without remuneration, the father of the Judge became a violent anti-British partizan & opened a shop in Kingstreet, Charleston. His hopeful son was taught reading, & writing & arithmetic to make him such another as his father, & thrust into a little shop of dry goods. The situation was uncongenial to his taste & fine talents, & he employed every moment he could rescue from drudgery to improve his mind by reading. His education was in this manner self acquired till he obtained a place in a lawyer's office, passed his four yrs. & was admitted to the bar. He was drawn from the bar into Congress in 1811, then about 33 yrs. of age, having acquired a handsome fortune by his talents, his incorruptible integrity, & invariable

[22] Joseph Peace, who married Mary Rudhall in 1796, became associated with Cheves in 1802. Their offices were in Courthouse Square.

[23] Later, in Beverly, Abbot added a note that Cheves had become head of the U. S. Bank.

[24] For a more accurate account of the life of Langdon Cheves (1776-1857) see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, IV, 62-64. Also, Susan Smythe Bennett, "The Cheves Family of South Carolina," this *Magazine*, XXXV (July, October 1934), 79-95, 130-152.

punctuality. The money collected for his clients was immediately paid over to them; if not called for, it was delivered at their counting houses. He improved his fortune & happiness by marrying Miss Dulless, the dr. of an iron monger & a lady of great merit. A considerable fortune has fallen to them by the death of a relation in India.[25]

The respectable gentleman from whom I have these particulars is an inflexible federalist. The following anecdote illustrates his & the prevailing idea of Judge C.'s integrity. Having written his will & being anxious that so important an instrument should be safely constructed, he inclosed it with a 100 $ bill for C.'s opinion & amendments & a request that he would be his executor. The attorney returned the will & fee, remarking in his billet that he could not be of service to him—that the will, notwithstanding some legal informalities, was a safe one—& that with pleasure he accepted the office of his executor. "There is not another democrat in the State," said the stern federalist, "to whom I would have confided my family & estate." A box of cordials to the Judge's lady was the close of this honorable negotiation.

The career of the Judge in Congress is well known to have conciliated the confidence of all parties. By the aid of the Federalists he carried the speaker's chair against the popular Clay. Retiring from Congress, his talents were employed by the Legislature of his native state in the office of Attorney Gen'l & soon, that the public might enjoy them where their influence could most of all be felt, the office of an additional Judge was created on the Supreme Bench & given to him with the salary of 3000 $ per annum, 1200 more than the old Judges Grimké and Bay receive.[26]

A further mark of confidence has recently been conferred upon him by the stockholders of the National Bank of this State. By a unanimous vote they have decided to use their utmost influence to promote his appointment to be President of this grand monied institution. In furtherance of the design, they have consulted him as to his willingness to accept the office & to reside in Philadelphia & have commenced correspondence to effect the object.

[25] Cheves married Mary Elizabeth Dulles, daughter of Joseph Dulles of Charleston, in 1806. They had fourteen children.

[26] John Faucheraud Grimké (1752-1819), a Cambridge graduate and veteran of the American Revolution, was father of Thomas, Sarah, and Angelina Grimké. Elihu Hall Bay (1754-1838), a native of Maryland, was a justice for nearly half a century and a man about whom many anecdotes were told. An ardent Federalist, he once saw a youth lying inebriated in the street and looking down at him said, "Drunk, drunk, and a Democrat!"

On the following day [December 2], I was present at the visitation of Mr. Hurlbut's school.[27] There was a semicircle of 15 or 18 visitors, most of them the literati of this place. Among them were Mr. Pringle, the Parsons of the city, Dr. Finley, Dr. Palmer, Messrs. King, Gadsden, & Dr. G'n, Trapier, Mannigault. &c., &c.[28] The examination was begun before I entered. I was conducted round the formed semicircle, introduced to all, & placed between Mr. Trapier & Horry, a former Intendant of the city.[29] I was much pleased with the exhibition of the classes. There was diversity of scholarship, as there always must be. But it was sufficiently manifest that the discipline of the school is admirable—that the pupils are thoroughly grounded in elements—that they have in their instructor an example & aid of Attic simplicity & precision in translating the classics. The satisfaction of the examiners was very legible in their countenances & very handsomely announced in the papers on the following morning by Mr. King, it is said.

As a stimulus to honorable exertion in this institution, a sheet of paper is laid on the table; &, after a class has retired from examination, the gentlemen write the names of 1st & 2d whom they regard as excelling the rest; & these names are announced to the public thro the papers. The young bosoms are seen to palpitate with hope & anxiety; and some of them feel the impulse & stumble thro rapidity. Others lose some part of their recollections thro a slow & cautious movement. A few dextrously keep the balance & are both cautious & alert & hold both memory & imagination & utterance at command. Some of the finest youths appeared on the occasion. A son of the Botanist Mr. Elliot was a beautiful, a lovely & eloquent boy in every branch.[30] Also a son of Dr. Logan & his younger brother in the same class. Mr. Trapier's son is a fine boy, manly

[27] The Charleston *Courier*, December 8, 1818, contains an account of these exercises.

[28] This was probably James R. Pringle who died in 1840. James E. B. Finley (1758-1819), a physician, was a Maryland native. He was especially interested in pediatrics and pioneered in vaccination. "Dr. G'n." was the Reverend Christopher Edwards Gadsden (later bishop) who was rector of St. Philip's from 1814 to 1852. Paul Trapier, a planter who lived at 6 Short Street, died in the early 1820's. Joseph Manigault, a wealthy planter who died in 1843, was owner of the famous residence at 350 Meeting Street.

[29] Elias Horry, city intendant from 1815 to 1817 and again in 1821, later became president of the South Carolina Canal & Railway Company.

[30] Stephen Elliott (1771-1830), born in Beaufort and educated at Yale, moved to Charleston where he became the first president of the Bank of South Carolina and also the first professor of botany and natural history at the South Carolina Medical College. His son Stephen Elliott (1806-1866) became the first Episcopal bishop of Georgia.

& a scholar.[31] I regretted to lose a moment of this examination—but was called out by Mr. Lovell to fulfil my engagement to dine with him at the elegant seat of Mr. Poinsett—[32] I shall endeavor to visit this highly respectable & interesting institution in a private way before I leave the South. . . .

Dec. 8, 1818. This day H. Izard Esq. of The Elms called & invited me to take a seat in his carriage & go out to his residence about 17 miles.[33] Engaged to go out at one o'clock. Hastened to complete my letters to the Northward & left the package with Mrs. S. containing a letter to Pres. Kirkland, one to I. A. Cummings, & another to I. E. Sprague of Salem, inclosing a crown sheet to my wife.[34] Wrote also a letter to D. C. Webbe Esq. for neglecting my engagement to dine with him on Thursday, declined Mr. Thayer's invitation to dine with him on Wednesday, & Dr. Flinn's also to dine with him on the same day. In all the hurry of preparations was called down to the Miss Wagners & two of their friends who called with them.[35] These accomplished young ladies called at the request of their mother, now at Columbia, to whom I brought letters from Boston. Their mother had called herself, before she left town, but I failed to see her. On my return to Charleston it must be my earliest object to call on this respectable family. Mrs. W. is expected from Columbia before Christmas.

About half past 1 we were in the carriage with a powerful fleet pair of black horses. We travelled rapidly into the country, met & past an astonishing multitude of waggons with cotton & Warsamsaw waggons

[31] Paul Trapier (1806-1872) served as rector of St. Michael's, 1840-1846. Concerning his teacher, Mr. Hurlburt, Trapier did not have the fondest memories. He termed him "a hard-featured, cold-hearted Yankee" who was accurate, but "dry as dust."

[32] Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851), diplomat and statesman, was at this time a member of the state legislature where he was a stern advocate of internal improvements. His "elegant seat" was on North Pinckney Street.

[33] Henry Izard (1771-1826) was born at sea, son of Ralph Izard (1741-1804). He was educated in England and served for a time in the state legislature. "The Elms" had been rebuilt in 1812 following destruction of an eighteenth-century mansion by fire. For descriptions of "The Elms" see Samuel Gaillard Stoney, *Plantations of the Low Country*, Charleston, 1938, p. 76; Harriette Kershaw Leiding, *Historic Houses of South Carolina*, Philadelphia and London, 1921, pp. 28-29; and Henry A. M. Smith, "Goose Creek," this *Magazine*, XXIX (July 1928), 167-174.

[34] John Thornton Kirkland (1770-1840) was president of Harvard from 1810 to 1828, sometimes termed that institution's "Augustan Age." Under his guidance Harvard definitely moved toward university status.

[35] The Misses Wagner were probably children of John Wagner who died in 1805. He married Ann Bocquett of Charleston, and they had a family of ten.

with smaller articles of commerce for the Charleston market.[36] Several gentlemen's seats, emblossomed with trees of wild orange, live oak, & laurels of different kinds, were designated by my interesting friend & various anecdotes connected with each.

The travelling was heavy thro a sand road, poached & cut deep by waggons of 3000 wt. The horses were urged, however, at a round speed and smoked with foam. Often we turned from the high way & ranged thro the woods in a narrow & less disturbed path & again abruptly shifting the course returned to the country road. The carriage was thus often brushed by the trees, under which we were whirled along, & I let down the glass to avoid risk to my eyes. We were brought to a sudden stand at 10 mile Spring, the whole road being choked with waggons to the number of 12, resting to water their animals. The negro drivers were seen with their tubs on their heads returning from the Spring & refreshing their teams. We were obliged patiently to wait, & a string of carriages behind us every minute lengthening, till the animals were satisfied; when the choaked stream gave way, we rushed into the thorough fare.

We soon arrived at the dessolute plantation of my opulent friend, where he had appointed a black to meet him with a pair of fresh horses. This was the scene of his earliest ingenuity as a planter. It spread itself over a surface of 1200 acres, a condsiderable part of which are at present a pine barren; but much of the land appeared fertile & would with cultivation & in a favorable season yield rice, cotton, corn & grass, the last two I should judge with a harvest resembling those which garnish the interval of the Connecticut.

His first essay in architecture appeared in the mansion, placed in a favorable spot, consisting of a center of two stories & wings of one. We did not visit it, but drove into the village of negro huts where the blacks & the horses were found.

While the horses were changed, we lighted from the carriage & surveyed the relics of a cotton crop. The plants had been pinched with drought & nipped with frost, but still exhibited a specimen of a cotton field. The plants were from 2 to 6 feet high & considerably ramified. The precious staple was contained in a bud of about 2 inches diameter, bursting forth when mature & requiring the fingers to open where it was immature. My friend led me to two fine plants side by side to exemplify the short staple & the long, or Sea-Island, which are so nicely discriminated in the market.

[36] Wassamassaw Swamp is about thirty miles northwest of Charleston near the headwaters of the Ashley River.

The Sea-Is. plant, like its staple, was nearly twice as large & tall, as its fellow in the same hill. They are planted in rows, not hills, & hoed every week & thus ultimately forming a ridge about the plants, nearly a foot in height. Three acres is estimated to be the task of a negro for the season, & he hoes a half acre per day, & passes over his field once a week, to keep the field perfectly clean being the grand requisite to a good crop. The task is easily accomplished, and the industrious black has from 1/3 to 1/2 his day to himself—to lie on a short bench under a broiling sun, to bask his glossy face in its radiance—or to cultivate his private garden & feed *his* poultry.

We called at the only occupied tenement in this extensive domain, where was a pale faced old man of 50 & two young women. The latter were spinning the gleaned cotton of this field.

Mr. I. has employed this man to live on the spot, to preserve the buildings from fire & depredation, & to *feed swine* on shares. It was an appropriate employment, as the poor fellow had been something of a prodigal both in conduct & suffering. He was addicted to the Northern vice of drinking—& had been almost every year visited with fever in the low country, in which few whites are found to survive a single summer. The poor fellow intends spending the next summer on this estate, & thinks that the fever is debilitating to be sure, but not a killing thing. I doubt if he survives the next touch, which assuredly will reach him.

With fresh horses of admirable mettle we started off in high style & with little further variety, except passing pine barrens, some decayed mansions & plantations deserted by the fickle & rolling population, we arrived about sunsetting on the frontier of Mr. Izard's plantation & place of residence. We entered a vast field that diffused itself in every direction. The perspective was enlivened with a whole village of negro huts of commodious size & in general furnished with brick chimneys—a respectable house of two stories accommodated the overseer—barns, carriage houses, mills, cotton jennies—&c., &c. were scattered at safe distances and without any thing of the studied order often seen in the narrower establishments in the environs of Boston. The whole, however, constituted an interesting landscape, especially when considered as circumstances & back ground to the principal objects yet to be mentioned.

A good half mile from the mansion we descried the magnificent building, which closed the vista we then were entering. Half the distance we pranced on a fine turnpike-built road—& then entered a handsome gate & at the same time an avenue of lofty elms & of loftier live oaks, which reached their branchy limbs high over our heads, almost touching each other in fellowship, while their trunks by admeasurement are 60 feet apart.

The ancient mansion had been burnt & was immediately rebuilt by the proprietor to preserve his attachment to the spot of his ancestors. He was not willing to trust himself to any delay, he remarked, lest, like some of his neighbors, he should be inclined to leave the plantation dessolate, or at least to be the exclusive residence of his overseer & blacks. The mansion fronts south & consists of a parallelogram & projections with a one story piazza South & a two story piazza North. The southern piazza resembles the portico of my church; the Northern is a beautiful recess, leading into a spacious entry connected with the principal apartments. The pillars are of the Doric order & surrounded with a neat pediment; the whole proportion fills the eye with fine effect.

From the Southern piazza you enter a hall 30 by 20 feet in the clear, which immediately communicates with the Library, 20 by 20. This delightful apartment with some thousands of admirably selected books is assigned to the stranger, furnished with a fire, a servant, & every thing that can accommodate the writer or delight the reader. Any subject to which his attention may be called may be traced thro the most select authors on these shelves. All recent publications of prime merit in English & French are here found in superb editions if their be a choice. The latest numbers of the *Edinboro'* & *Quarterly Reviews* beckon the hand of the curious. And the pencil & chisel of the artist in many of the editions vie with the typographer & hot press, which shall most exquisitely delight the inspector.

The projection of the N. W. corner forms a superb octagonal drawing room, 24 feet diameter. A large fire place with elegant marble garniture occupies an eighth part, connected with the Hall chimney. The slab resting on marble columns of fine proportions, vein, & polish are adorned with flower vases. The covers are china in the form of a bouquet, the several artificial flowers seeming almost real, with perforations for the insertion of living flowers, their stems saturated by water within. The whole room is extremely beautiful & furnished & lighted in a tasteful manner. The musical instruments were sure to attract my attention. The piano is a good instrument & played with spirit, variety & taste by Miss Mary I.[37] Near it, lying as yet in profound slumber is the guitar & also

[37] Mary Izard (1796-1822) married Thomas Middleton. She died in a severe storm which lashed Sullivan's Island. Her mother, Emma Philadelphia Middleton, daughter of Arthur Middleton, died in 1813. In all, she had nine children, but only three of them were living when their father died in 1826. Walter Izard (1804-1835), his heir, left the lowcountry for Landsford, S. C., an indication—if any were needed—of the declining productivity of land near Charleston. Abbot's hostess at "The Elms" in 1818 was Henry Izard's second wife, Claudia Smith, daughter of Thomas Loughton Smith. They had no children. She died in 1855.

Alice

the lyre. (The Mistress of the mansion, I have learned, plays on these.) Pressing the second daughter* to display her talent in musick, what was my astonishment to see the servant enter & parade in the center of the Hall the most superb Harp I presume in Christendom. It is about 6 feet high & most graceful in its form & extensive in its octaves & as elegant in its whole construction as polished brass & the more precious metals can render it. By means of pedals the most chromatic strains are touched with accuracy & the keys varied with precision without the least dependence on finger measurement. The sweetest delicacy is attained by the touch of a pedal closing the principal avenues of sound. The forte strikes the ear by the disclosure again of the doors, which is swelled with astonishing spirit to fortissime by the firmer grasp & twang of the flying fingers.

After a renewed request, the young lady embraced the instrument. She played standing, leaning against the instrument, with a hand on each side, extending the right & left foot in alternation to the pedals near the floor, as key & tone demanded. Having never seen the harp, the effect was magical. Tho I cannot speak comparatively of dif't players on the harp, I am sure that I have seldom listened to any performer on other instruments with equal delight. The harmony was not as full as on the organ, nor the power as great; yet the music was various, the double octave frequent on the bass & the immediate cords filled, the movement sometimes rapid, & sometimes slow & prodigiously emphatic.

We were soon introduced to the hall & partook of a plentiful repast of tea, hominy, John Cake, & meats. The evening was past in various, but incessant conversation in which my friend displayed much knowledge of the world & books & very handsome colloquial powers. Mrs. I. partook with great cheerfulness in the mental repast, contributing her share; the young ladies also with animation & modesty. Retiring to the Library, I consigned my self to the care of a merciful providence for the night & a delightful bed & slept soundly.

Dec. 9th. Before sunrise, a servant kindled a fire in the library & a second aired my linnen & carried my boots & shoes to be brushed. He again returned, unbuttoned the suspenders from the Pantaloons, thrust his hands into the pockets, separated the wais'coat from the coat, took out the money, penknife, comb, pencil case—& laid them on the chair before me, & also the handkerchiefs from the coat pockets, & bore away my wardrobe to another room in silence. However, he soon honestly returned with them brushed in the finest style.

We were summoned to the hall to breakfast with a Carolinian variety on the table, coffee, tea, & milk, hominy, rice, John cakes, & toast, gar-

* Alice Izard (1802-1863) married Joseph Heyward

nished with eggs in a new & excellent manner, set on in a dish of hot water.

After breakfast & an hour of conversation I retired to the Library & the Lord of the manor on horse back visited different departments of his estates. After dinner, we sallied out with canes, visited the stable in which horses were fed on the strippings of cornstalks, a richer nutriment, says Mr. I., than English hay; we surveyed an avenue of Elms & oaks, some of which were more than three feet in diameter, set out on the birth day of the proprietor by his father, a monument of that joyful event. The side walks are skirted with various shrubs beautiful in the flowering season, many of them entwined with the native woodbine, garnished in its season with an infinite multitude of beautiful & fragrant flowers.

We visited a field in which four blacks were employed, each with a horse or mule & a *spade* plough. The field was in cotton ridges & sowed by a black female, & rye ploughed in, with the two fold object in view to bring on a rich feed for winter grazing & to secure a summer's crop of ripened grain. The plowman guided the animal. The plough itself was to me a great novelty. It has a spade for a coulter, rounded at the bottom & curved a little upward. The frame was light & simple, consisting of a strong handle to the spade, running upward thro a beam, furnished with handles to keep it steady. There was no moulding board. The furrow was not deep, but sufficient to cover the grain. The soil was surprizingly mellow & freable, the consequence of its weekly hoing in the summer.

We returned, ranging round the premises which once constituted the elegant garden of Mr. Izard's father. It has been the plan of the present proprietor to cultivate the more profitable field with his laborers & to expend less money & sweat on the ornaments of a garden, which "wastes its sweetness on a desert air—" from which indeed he is obliged to flee for his life by the first of June, while it is in all its splendor & beauty. Retiring at that delightful season from this mansion, flower garden, & flowering groves, I should think the family must go reluctantly & casting behind them many a long & lingering look, like the banished pair from the groves of Eden.

Abbot's account of life in the South Carolina Low County in 1818 ends at this point. Early in 1819 he spent some weeks at the John's Island estate of James Legaré, filling a pulpit several Sundays while there. On March 7, 1819, he wrote to his wife, "I have been spending a couple of months on John's Island, a lovely spot in the vicinity of this city. I feel grateful to a kind Providence for a call into a situation adapted to promote health and spirits, while it afforded me a little congenial occupation. The tokens of private friendship, on the island, have been of the most comforting and salutary nature; and I feel much pleasure in the hope that, through the blessing of God, these months of affliction and separation from my flock and family will not prove a blank in my life." [38]

A short time after these words were written Reverend Abbot journeyed to Savannah for a visit, returning to Charleston early in April. Then, in May 1819 he began an unusual overland trip northward in a sulky. Traveling alone, he toured leisurely through the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina and Virginia en route to Massachusetts and home.

[38] Everett, *Sermons of the Late Rev. Abiel Abbot . . .*, p. xxvii.

(To be Continued)

THE FREE NEGRO AND THE SOUTH CAROLINA COURTS, 1790-1860

By DONALD J. SENESE *

Free Negroes in antebellum South Carolina occupied a unique and dubious position in a society established for free whites and enslaved blacks. This class originated chiefly from masters' displaying their affection for their own mulatto children by freeing them or for their slaves by emancipating them as a reward for extraordinary fidelity and service, or by a slave's purchase of his own or his wife's freedom.[1] The number of the free Negroes remained small, never reaching two per cent of the total white and slave population of the state. The number of free Negroes and the percentage that they represented of the total state population during this period were as follows: 1,801 (.72%) in 1790; 3,185 (.92%) in 1800; 4,554 (1.10%) in 1810; 6,826 (1.36%) in 1820; 7,921 (1.36%) in 1830; 8,276 (1.39%) in 1840; and 8,960 (1.34%) in 1850. On the eve of the Civil War, in 1860, there were 9,914 free Negroes residing in South Carolina.[2]

The presence of the free Negro created an unusual legal problem. Ulrich Bonnell Phillips after studying slave labor in the Charleston area noted that a number of free Negroes "were gradually coming to acquire legal status as freemen, exempt from slavery regulations but in no wise recognized by the whites as their equal."[3] In an era when citizenship was only hazily defined, the free Negro could be considered a quasi-citizen at best. Despite various laws which regulated the free Negro, the task of ultimately determining his status in society fell to the courts of the state.

The judges of the South Carolina courts realized that the first duty of the law was to keep sound the society they served, and the decisions of these judicial bodies between 1790 and 1860 were representative of the truth of the Latin maxim, *Ratio est legis anima: mutata legis ratione*

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[1] David Duncan Wallace, *South Carolina: A Short History, 1520-1948,* Columbia, 1961, p. 442.

[2] "Registrar's report presented to the State House and Senate in November, 1860," cited in John Livingston Bradley, "Slave Manumission in South Carolina 1820-1860," unpublished master's thesis, University of South Carolina, 1964, p. 118.

[3] Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, "Slave Labor in the Charleston District," *Political Science Quarterly,* XXII (September 1907), 420.