

THE NORTH COMES SOUTH:  
NORTHERN METHODISTS IN FLORIDA DURING RECONSTRUCTION

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines three groups of northern Methodists who made their way to north Florida during Reconstruction: northern white male Methodists, northern white female Methodists, and northern black male and female Methodists. It analyzes the ways in which these men and women confronted the differences they encountered in Florida's southern society as compared to their experiences living in a northern society. School catalogs, school reports, letters, and newspapers highlight the ways in which these northerners explained the culture and behaviors of southern freedmen and poor whites in Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello. This study examines how these particular northern men and women present in Florida during Reconstruction applied elements of "the North" to their interactions with the freedmen and poor whites. Ultimately, it sheds light on northern Methodist middle class values in southern society.

For my father

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## INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Civil War, many white and black northerners came to the South to provide education and support for the region's freedmen. While many different types of northerners came to Florida during Reconstruction, some men and women represented religious organizations from the North, including the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, the American Missionary Association, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. These organizations set about establishing schools and providing welfare and aid to the South's freedmen, with the intent of educating them to be not only upstanding Christians, but also citizens of the United States.

Besides those representing religious organizations, other northerners were present in Florida during Reconstruction. While this thesis will not examine these groups, it is useful to have an understanding of the various "types" of northerners present in the state. Some enterprising northern businessmen, often given the derogatory name of "carpetbaggers" by southerners, arrived in Florida as the war ended. Many established businesses and were viewed by southerners as "up to no good." Historian Maurice M. Vance argues that most of the northerners who came to Florida did not engage in agriculture, and few were politicians. However, many government officials—such as judges and clerks—made Florida their permanent home after the war. Teachers, ministers, and merchants (perhaps the largest group of northerners present and arguably the wealthiest) were also present. In all, Vance states that about five percent of the total population of Florida during Reconstruction was northern-born.<sup>1</sup>

With the influx of northerners into the South during Reconstruction, historians have questioned the nature of Reconstruction itself, debating whether Reconstruction was a strictly

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<sup>1</sup> Maurice M. Vance, "Northerners in Late Nineteenth Century Florida: Carpetbaggers or Settlers?", *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (Jul., 1959): 1-14.

southern or a national issue. Early studies of Reconstruction were published by William A. Dunning in the early 1900s, as segregation and Jim Crow laws took hold in the South. Historian Eric Foner has studied the Dunning school, and states that in this interpretation of Reconstruction, Dunning and his followers (who would adhere to the “Dunning School” of Reconstruction) argued that “the white South genuinely accepted the reality of military defeat, stood ready to do justice to the emancipated slaves, and desired above all a quick reintegration into the fabric of national life.” Foner writes that Dunning believed that though late in the war President Abraham Lincoln had begun developing a plan to reunite the country, Radical Republicans strived to make it exceedingly difficult for his efforts to succeed. Dunning blamed President Andrew Johnson for many of the failures of Reconstruction and the “corruption” that plagued politics of that time, involving northern “carpetbaggers,” southern “scalawags,” and the freedmen. Dunning sympathized with southern whites, and was therefore critical of the changes brought to the nation with the influx of northerners to the South, and the emancipation of the slaves.<sup>2</sup>

Foner states that the “fundamental underpinning” of Dunning’s interpretation of Reconstruction was his complete criticism and ridicule of African Americans. Dunning and his followers believed that African Americans were “childlike,” making them incapable of understanding their roles as citizens of the United States, which he claims northerners “thrust upon them.” The Dunning School largely ignored the role that African Americans played in their own progress during Reconstruction, and historians since Dunning have criticized his interpretation as racist. Dunning’s belief in the ineptitude of the emancipated slaves, along with

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<sup>2</sup> For more on William Archibald Dunning’s views of Reconstruction, see William A. Dunning, *Reconstruction: Political & Economic, 1865-1877* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1907); Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, *The New American Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), xix, xx.



his criticism of the northern presence in the South and some southerners' support of Reconstruction, led Dunning to see Reconstruction as a national issue that utterly failed in its attempt to unite the country.<sup>3</sup>

In 1935, African American civil rights activist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois published *Black Reconstruction in America*, largely in response to Dunning's work. In this work, Du Bois presents Reconstruction as a Marxist-like struggle between whites and blacks, with the exploitation of black labor and the fight to control the South's resources. The book is one of the first to analyze the important roles that many African Americans played during Reconstruction as politicians, government leaders, and activists for black rights. Du Bois condemns previous historians who had completely ignored African Americans in the study of Reconstruction, or worse, that they presented blacks as ignorant, lazy, incompetent, or dishonest. Du Bois' work presented Reconstruction as a national issue that affected northern and southern whites and blacks. Du Bois believed that Reconstruction, as a Marxist class struggle, created new opportunities for democracy and industry in both the North and the South.<sup>4</sup>

During the 1960s, the international conflict of the Cold War and the civil rights movement in the United States led to new interpretations of Reconstruction. One of the first major works to reassess the findings of the Dunning school came from Kenneth Stampp, who published *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865 to 1877*, in 1965. In this book, Stampp works to redeem Reconstruction as an economic, political, and social movement. Like Dunning, Stampp argues that Reconstruction was a national issue that "exerted a powerful influence on the political behavior" over both northern and southern white men. He determines that

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., xx.

<sup>4</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1935): 4-5, 711-13; Foner, *Reconstruction*, xxi.

economically, Reconstruction was a success because it consolidated the “position of American industrial capitalism.” Stamppp argues that economic reformers went after “irresponsible” industrialists, and toward the end of the nineteenth century, unbridled American industrial power united many southern and northern whites who had the same economic goals.<sup>5</sup>

Stamppp argues that Reconstruction was also a political success for the Radical Republicans, who managed to become powerful without establishing a strong foothold in the South. Stamppp points out that the Democratic party won only one election, in 1892, before 1912, forming strong bonds with many southern Democrats. Where Reconstruction was the least successful, in Stamppp’s opinion, was in “making southern society more democratic,” specifically in reference to political rights for the freedmen. He attributes the failure of the freedmen to gain autonomy to the large presence of white landowners in the South, and the freedmen’s lack of political and civil rights even with the passage of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments. Stamppp acknowledges, though, that without the Civil War and Reconstruction, the process of African Americans gaining their rights would have been greatly delayed.<sup>6</sup>

Also in 1965, historian Joel Williamson published *After Slavery: the Negro in South Carolina during Reconstruction, 1861-1877*, in which he argues that South Carolina’s African Americans became very active in their educational and political futures, establishing their own separate churches, schools, and political organizations. Williamson also examines the reforms that many of South Carolina’s freedmen tried to institute, by agitating for the right to vote, property rights, and educational rights. He pays particular attention to the racial conflicts that South Carolina experienced between its white and black population. He argues that the problems

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<sup>5</sup> Kenneth Stamppp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 23, 213.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 214-15.

of bigoted racial attitudes ultimately led to the separation of the races. While Williamson's work is a case study of blacks in South Carolina, it speaks to the larger national issues of Reconstruction.<sup>7</sup>

While Joel Williamson studied African Americans in South Carolina during Reconstruction, Joe M. Richardson examined African Americans in Florida, publishing *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida, 1865-1877*, in 1965. Like the other revisionist historians before him, Richardson argues that Reconstruction was not a failure for African Americans. He presents Florida's freedmen as competent and able, and notes that they made significant progress during the years of Reconstruction. He states that many blacks adjusted well to freedom by establishing homes and churches, becoming employed in skilled occupations, and attending schools. Richardson admits, however, that after 1876, blacks lost many of the rights they had gained during the previous eleven years of freedom. Like Williamson, Richardson believes that without Reconstruction, it would have been very difficult for blacks to secure their rights at all, and was therefore an important step in the long process of acquiring civil rights.<sup>8</sup>

The revisionist historians Stampp, Williamson, and Richardson took the first steps in redeeming Reconstruction, which greatly affected the lives of African Americans. It can be argued that they were influenced by the turbulent period of the Civil Rights Movement in which they wrote. They saw similarities between the national struggle for civil rights for African Americans during the 1960s, and the national issues of race and rights during Reconstruction. Unlike most historians writing before them, Stampp, Williamson, and Richardson gave African

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<sup>7</sup> Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: the Negro in South Carolina during Reconstruction, 1861-1877* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 63.

<sup>8</sup> Joe M. Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida, 1865-1877*, Florida State University Studies, ed. James A. Preu, no. 46 (Tallahassee: The Florida State University, 1965), 240.

Americans agency in their role during Reconstruction and argued that the former slaves and freedmen were competent and capable of providing for themselves and their families. While these historians wrote case studies on South Carolina and Florida, the political, economic and social problems of those states speak to the greater national issues of Reconstruction. These historians began the process of redeeming Reconstruction as a flawed but largely successful economic, political, and social movement.

In 1988, historian Eric Foner published his seminal work titled *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. In this book, Foner identifies Reconstruction as a largely southern issue that can be interpreted within a national context. Foner argues that blacks were central to Reconstruction—instead of being passive bystanders, he demonstrates that blacks were active in securing much of their social and economic independence during Reconstruction. Foner examines how southern society and economy changed as a result of the war and emancipation by analyzing the presence of northerners in the South during this period. Foner also analyzes the problems of race that troubled the South, arguing that racial attitudes affected “the social and political order” of the South. Finally, he places the southern issues of Reconstruction into a national context, discussing the problems that inevitably developed out of the idea that the Civil War and Reconstruction had transformed America into a country where citizens were equal, regardless of race.<sup>9</sup>

The most recent historiography has shifted away from Foner's analysis and focuses on Reconstruction as a national issue. In 2004, historian David Quigley published *Second Founding: New York City, Reconstruction, and the Making of American Democracy*, in which

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<sup>9</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, xxiv-xxvii.

he studied how Reconstruction affected New York City. Quigley calls Reconstruction a “second founding,” during which American democracy completely changed. Quigley argues that during this second founding, the nation had to adapt to “industrializing, urbanizing, and most important, *interracial* democracy.” Quigley uses New York City as a case study in order to determine how the second founding developed. According to Quigley, race and class intertwined to create a new “interracial urban life,” new reform movements began, and a new class of “metropolitan industrialists” influenced both the economy and politics. In his study of the changes that took place in New York City during Reconstruction, Quigley hopes to shed light on Reconstruction as a complicated but important national issue.<sup>10</sup>

In 2009, historian Leslie A. Schwalm published *Emancipation's Diaspora: Race and Reconstruction in the Upper Midwest*. In this book, Schwalm states that the northern Midwest was changed as a result of the migration of southern blacks to the area during Reconstruction. She argues that the idea of “race” was fundamentally altered when northern whites and southern blacks came together in the Midwest. To Schwalm, the establishment of black citizenship in the Midwest revolved around black enfranchisement, segregation, civil rights, and race, but the experience was different in the Midwest than in the Northeast or the South. She believes that southern blacks in the Midwest not only fought to establish themselves as citizens, but also to commemorate and remember their experiences during slavery in an unfamiliar area. Schwalm argues, then, that Emancipation and Reconstruction are national issues that have been little

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<sup>10</sup> David Quigley, *Second Founding: New York City, Reconstruction, and the Making of American Democracy* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2004), xi, xiv-xv.

studied in the context of the Midwest. She feels that because little historiography has focused on the effect of emancipation on the Midwest, the full story of Reconstruction has yet to be told.<sup>11</sup>

Historian Kate Masur has also studied the implications of creating a new democracy during Reconstruction. In her book, *An Example for All the Land*, Masur argues that Washington, D. C., became the epicenter of social and political reform for African Americans seeking equality during Reconstruction. She examines the relationships between white and black citizens, in order to determine how they approached the subjects of equality and the right to vote. Of the utmost concern for Washington D. C.'s blacks were the rights of citizenship and how they could be gained during Reconstruction. Masur believes that the questions of "post-emancipation equality" speak to the larger issues of equality that the nation faced during Reconstruction.<sup>12</sup>

In this study, I will examine some of the northern white and black Methodists who came to Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida.<sup>13</sup> Some of the men and women examined in this study first worked in Jacksonville, but then moved to Gainesville and Monticello as their work spread across the state. Arguably, the men and women representing the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, the American Missionary Association, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church had the greatest opportunity to interact with the freedmen and poor whites, more so than other northerners present in Florida during Reconstruction. The sources available, including letters, newspapers, and school reports, provide an interesting opportunity to compare the views

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<sup>11</sup> Leslie A. Schwalm, *Emancipation's Diaspora: Race and Reconstruction in the Upper Midwest*, John Hope Franklin Series in African American history and culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 3-7.

<sup>12</sup> Kate Masur, *An Example for All the Land: Emancipation and the Struggle over Equality in Washington, D. C.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 10-12.

<sup>13</sup> "Reconstruction" ended at different times in the southern states. For this study, I consider the end of Reconstruction to be 1877, although the first chapter of this study, concerning northern white male Methodist ministers, goes beyond 1877 into the late 1880s. This is mostly due to the unavailability of source material from the 1870s.

and opinions of these individuals who were working in different locations, but in relatively the same capacity.

However, there are some limitations with these sources. The letters from the northern white women come from the American Missionary Association Archives, and though they are very detailed, at times only one or two relevant letters appear from a single year. The letters from the African American northern Methodists come from the *Christian Recorder*, the publication of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Unfortunately, there are no collections of letters from the ministers present in Florida to my knowledge that are available to researchers, so the letters the ministers wrote to the *Christian Recorder* which were subsequently published provide the best source of information for their work in Florida. The sources from the northern white Methodists come from the school catalogs of Cookman Institute, which provide detailed information about the curriculum and rules of the school; however, there are no surviving papers from the administrators to supplement this material.

The northerners who came to Florida during Reconstruction had many social and political problems to contend with. According to historian Joe M. Richardson, most of Florida's sparse population was based in north Florida. The general population was quite displeased with the outcome of the war, believing that they would live "under yankee rule." Richardson notes that though Florida began to recover as early as 1866, there were numerous problems the state had to face—many respectable and well-known men had been killed in the war, the state needed a new labor system, and crops were growing poorly. A main concern was Florida's small, poor population, which was compounded by a lack of strong currency. Richardson writes that "railroads had to be built, roads constructed and repaired, and capital brought to the state." The

post-war conditions in Florida during Reconstruction could certainly affect the work of the northern missionaries in the state.<sup>14</sup>

The northern white and black men and women present in North Florida during Reconstruction observed the differences in industry, economy, temperance, education, and ideals of citizenship in these cities in comparison to northern society during Reconstruction. Their observations demonstrate that they attempted to confront issues they encountered in the South in the same ways that they would in the North. The case studies of Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida, can also provide an example of how Reconstruction as an economic, social, and political process sought to slowly draw the South back into the North. It sheds light on how northern Methodist middle class values were transposed in a southern society.<sup>15</sup>

This study takes a qualitative approach to understanding how northern white and black Methodists brought “the North” with them to Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida. It examines three different types of northern Methodists—northern white male Methodists, northern white female Methodists, and northern black male and female Methodists. Using school catalogs, school reports, letters, and newspaper articles from these individuals, I will attempt to shed light on their beliefs about the North and how they perceived those ideas in relation to southern society in places like Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello. Due to the constraints of a master’s thesis and the unavailability of source material, this study will not examine how the southern freedmen and poor whites with whom these northerners came into contact reacted to their presence in these cities.

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<sup>14</sup> Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 2-7.

<sup>15</sup> While many types of northerners came to Florida during Reconstruction, I am only interested in the northern white male and female Methodists who came to north Florida during this time. I will not examine the northern politicians or industrialists who made Florida their home during Reconstruction in this study.



The following chapters are arranged by theme. Chapter One examines some of the women from the American Missionary Association and their perceptions of southern class conflict, time, employment, and temperance in their interactions with the freedmen and poor whites in places like Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida. Chapter Two analyzes the presence of some northern black male and female Methodists in Jacksonville between the years 1867 and 1878. This chapter analyzes how these men and women brought elements of the North to the freedmen in order to encourage education and the values of citizenship. Finally, Chapter Three examines the efforts of Samuel Darnell, a white male Methodist minister, to educate the freedmen at Cookman Institute in Jacksonville, Florida during his time there between 1876 and 1893. This chapter examines Darnell's perception of race and education in Jacksonville, and studies the subjects that he offered his students in order to demonstrate the influences from the North on their education.

## CHAPTER ONE

At the end of the Civil War, northern white women, working under the auspices of the American Missionary Association, made their way to the South in order to aid former slaves with their new status as freedmen of the United States. Many established churches and schools in places such as Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida. The goal of most of the women may have been education, but many brought northern middle class values to the freedmen, and to some extent, poor whites. By bringing elements of northern society to Florida, the women rejected aspects of southern society that did not fit with life in the North. This aspect of the northern presence in the South during the latter years of the Civil War and Reconstruction has been overlooked by many historians.

Many northern whites came south with their own ideas of how whites and blacks should live in a northern society. While northern teachers in Florida did not number even two hundred, even the small number of northern women present during the period of Reconstruction impacted the local population. In this chapter, I will attempt to show that the northern white women from the American Missionary Association responded to the differences they encountered in southern society by using northern middle class ideas about race, employment, working habits, punctuality, and temperance in places like Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida.

Very little historiography exists which analyzes the migration of northerners as a group to the South during the Civil War and Reconstruction. However, historians have studied southern migration to the North, but mostly during the years of World War I or afterward. How historians interpret this migration may provide insight into how northerners who came south affected change in these southern rural areas. Historian James R. Grossman has studied the migration of

black southerners to the North immediately following the end of World War I. Grossman argues that black southerners viewed the North as the land of opportunity and sought jobs in northern cities, where there was potential to better their lives through education or work. Grossman believes that these migrants, who, by 1935, numbered two million, represent an important change in American life because of the convergence of southern and northern beliefs, values, and racial attitudes in a short period of time. Grossman's work is important to this study because I believe that the same can be said about the meeting between northern white women, freedmen, and poor whites in Florida immediately following the Civil War.<sup>16</sup>

While few historians have studied the migration of northerners to the South, many more historians have studied how women have played a role in the creation of urban communities. In her work *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, historian Elizabeth York Enstam examines how women influenced the creation of a community in Dallas, Texas. Enstam's conclusions about the importance of women in the creation of a "modern" community in a southern state can be applied to the northern women in Florida. Enstam argues that as Dallas industrialized, transforming into an urban city, women began to step outside of their traditional roles and advocate social change, identifying urbanization as the basis for this change. Women in Dallas became economic and institutional leaders and altered how the community formed. The northern teachers in Florida, as products of northern urban environments, also experienced changes in society due to industrialization and brought these new views to Floridians.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 2-7.

<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth York Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life: Dallas, Texas, 1843-1920*, Centennial Series of the Association of Former Students, Texas A & M University, no. 72 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1998), xv.

Northerners who came to the South immediately following the Civil War faced intense opposition from southern whites inhabiting the area. Historian Ralph E. Morrow argues that southerners viewed the northerners as the embodiment of the Civil War, which had destroyed their homes and properties, and taken the lives of family and friends. Therefore, Morrow states, many southerners rebelled against the presence of northern aid workers in their communities, refusing to board or feed northerners who had come to educate the freedmen. In some areas, irritation with the northern presence escalated into violence. This hostile environment made the entrance of northern whites into southern states particularly difficult. Morrow believes, however, that many northerners who came south were ignorant of southern culture and society, which may have made an already volatile situation much worse.<sup>18</sup>

Poor whites of north Florida generally rejected the aid offered by the American Missionary Association in areas like Jacksonville and Gainesville.<sup>19</sup> Historian Stephen V. Ash has examined the status of poor whites and antebellum slave economy in the South. He argues that when the Union army marched south, they brought preconceived notions of white society with them. Ash states, “In Yankee eyes, southern white society was an anachronism from the medieval past. It comprised but two classes: a narrow oligarchy of slaveholding aristocrats who monopolized wealth, power, and education; and a broad mass of impotent poor whites,

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<sup>18</sup> Ralph E. Morrow, *Northern Methodism and Reconstruction* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1956), 234-38, 248-49.

<sup>19</sup> While I use the term “poor whites” in this section, this phrase is actually a misnomer. As historian Stephen V. Ash writes, “Like all stereotypes, this Yankee image of southern society distorted reality.” Due to traveler’s accounts and antislavery publications, northerners had gained an unrealistic view of southerners that was challenged when they moved into the South during Reconstruction. Ash argues that the term “poor whites” ignores a prominent southern middle class, and even if one identified a “poor white” as someone who did not own land, slaves, or animal herds, they would still be very much in the minority of the South’s white population. I will use the term “poor whites” not only because the teachers use the term, but also because they make a clear distinction between “poor whites” and “southerners” in their letters. See Stephen V. Ash, “Poor Whites in the Occupied South, 1861-1865,” *The Journal of Southern History* 57, no. 1 (Feb., 1991): 41.

oppressed, benighted, and degraded by the stigma attached to labor in a slave society.”

Northerners thought that poor whites would rejoice at the Union presence in the South, having grown discontented with the conditions of society during the antebellum period.<sup>20</sup>

Ash argues that there was a lack of class conflict between poor whites and other white southerners, which could be tied to the plantation economy. He states that poor whites accepted the divisions of society because under slavery, they were considered a class above blacks, whether enslaved or freed. Also, poor whites were tied to the slaveholders through kinship and paternalism, so social conflict between whites would not have benefitted either party. However, it is this connection, Ash believes, which created a “dual emancipation,” which was clear to contemporaries of the period, but has generally been lost to historians over time.<sup>21</sup>

Evidence for the dual emancipation theory in Florida comes from a woman named Harriet B. Greely, a northern teacher and wife to Gorham Greely, a Methodist minister working for the American Missionary Association. In January 1865, in a letter to corresponding secretary of the A. M. A., George Whipple, Greely wrote:

In the removal of slavery, almost as intolerable a burden is lifted from the ‘poor whites’ or ‘Crackers’ as they are called here, as from the slave. We have had considerable opportunity to see this class of people who flock in here for protection, and to hear the sad stories of their wrongs. They are miserably poor and ignorant and dirty, in many instances needing as much and help as the fugitive negro.<sup>22</sup>

Greely’s statement shows that northerners conceptualized that not only blacks had been victimized by slavery, but poor whites had felt burdened by it, too. Greely and other missionaries saw a need to aid poor whites because as the plantation economy crumbled, many

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 40, 42.

<sup>22</sup> H. B. Greely to G. Whipple, 25 January 1865, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

lost their ties to the plantation, the source of their livelihood. It is apparent, however, that many poor whites did not welcome the aid the missionaries offered.

One letter in particular is demonstrative of the attitudes of poor whites toward northerners in Florida. Written by the Supervisor of Contrabands, Charles B. Wilder, it details how poor whites rejected the help of northerners, and also Wilder's opinion of the link between poor whites and plantation owners. One section reads as follows:

[We must make] friends first of the poor whites who as a caste by themselves are about on a level with Colored race... Extremely bigoted and prejudiced against northern teachers and missionaries. Therefore we think it better in this indirect way to disown them by letting them see that what others can do, they can do and if encouraged this will at once inspire hope & confidence in themselves & start many of them on the way to improvement and prosperity. They have been heretofore convenient tools for the planters, but now, thrown upon themselves, filled with ignorance & special hatred against the Negro, because he understands common labor better.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps the most common complaint of the northern women in Florida, which is particularly telling of their middle class background, was the advancement of poverty which they found among blacks and poor whites. The women remarked not only about the desperate financial situation of the freedmen, but they seemed to be shocked by the living arrangements they encountered when interacting with both groups. Their focus on cleanliness can likely be linked to the urban environments in which they were raised.<sup>24</sup> In her book *The Gospel of Germs*, historian Nancy Tomes argues that with the advancement of "germ theory" in the mid-1800s, people, particularly in urban environments, placed a great emphasis on cleanliness and sanitation. She states that people began to recognize that cities were ideal places for germs and

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<sup>23</sup> C. B. Wilder to Oliver Bronson, 7 July 1868, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>24</sup> Emma Eveleth came from Brooklyn, New York, Harriet Greely from Kennebunkport, Maine, and Carrie M. Blood came from Lyme, New Hampshire. American Missionary Association, *American Missionary* XIV, no. 6 (June, 1870): 123.

disease to fester, so much so that after the Civil War, a strong movement began to introduce germ containment into urban, and to some extent rural, communities, with the goal of not only aiding the wealthy, but also the poor.<sup>25</sup>

Emma Eveleth commented in her earliest letters from 1865 and 1866 that the freedmen in Jacksonville were very poor and their housing situations abysmal. She stated that she had encountered a freed elderly couple, the wife aged sixty and the husband aged eighty, who were “so tidy & clean, not becaus [sic] they are any different from the others by nature, but becaus [sic] they are used to being tidy. The others who are so filthy in their habits, have always been driven almost to death with work & all.” She further explains that because of their lack of free time, they were uncleanly, but “can we expect them to go suddenly from that manner of life and become neat thrifty housekeepers?” Eveleth encouraged the freedmen she encountered to “white wash” and clean up “for their own sake...to show they are above the beasts, which they are proving very fast.” To Eveleth, cleanliness in the home could show that the freedmen had become “civilized” and could live as whites did.<sup>26</sup>

However the freedmen may have lived, Emma Eveleth seemed particularly concerned with the situation of the poor whites in Jacksonville. Poor whites’ disregard for their public appearance appalled teachers like Eveleth, who wrote of an encounter she had with a poor white woman in February 1865:

In our visit one day, among the colored people, we came across a white woman, living in a car & we have never seen a colored person more degraded in appearance than she. The

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<sup>25</sup> Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 49-54.

<sup>26</sup> Emma Eveleth to Simeon Jocelyn, 4 February 1865, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985); Emma Eveleth to M. Hunt, 2 February 1866, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

car & her person looked any thing but tidy. She had a fire in an iron basin, & the only place for the smoke to go out was the door. We spoke kindly to her & tried to encourage her to clean up & go to school & learn to live like other folks. She promised to come to our school. But as she did not appear we called on her again; she said it was too cold but she was coming. She may come, but I doubt it.<sup>27</sup>

One particular meeting between Eveleth and a poor white man provides particular insight into how the northern missionaries conceived of middle class behaviors. Upon her arrival for the new school term in November 1867, Eveleth was informed that she would be staying with a poor white family. Writing to Edward P. Smith, field agent for the A. M. A., Eveleth stated that she did not believe that Smith could “have any idea how the ‘poor whites’—or ‘Crackers’ as they are generally called—live, it is very different from the poor at the North.” She then recounted the story of meeting the man who would be her landlord, “a tall slender man, with long uncombed hair, dirty ragged clothes, his pants looked as if they were dropping off, his mouth full of tobacco, but he had an honest countenance which I rather liked, and attributed his other appearance to poverty and ignorance.”<sup>28</sup>

Eveleth inquired about meals and beverages, expecting fine meats, coffee, and tea, to which her landlord replied that they were very poor and could not give her “nice things.” The realization that she would not have these comforts did not bother her, until she inquired about her room:

I felt anxious to know what kind of room I should have and asked, what was the size of his house, how many rooms there were, he said ‘there is only one room’ I said one room? why where do you sleep? he said ‘we sleep, eat, and cook in that’ I thought...what shall I do now, the idea of sleeping with a whole family and visitors that may happen to be benighted. I am afraid my philanthropy will stagger here and said

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<sup>27</sup> Emma Eveleth to Simeon S. Jocelyn, 4 February 1865, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>28</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. P. Smith, 22 November 1867, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985). Underlines in original.



‘why that is not right we don’t do so at the North’ he said ‘we are poor and can’t do any better.’<sup>29</sup>

This excerpt reveals much about how Emma Eveleth conceived of the poor, especially the northern poor. Regarding the meals and beverages, she seemed to have been predisposed to believe that though these southern whites were poor, they would have some meats, coffee, or tea, perhaps like poor northerners. It also demonstrates how Eveleth, who was from Brooklyn, New York, conceived of living arrangements. She seemed shocked that the family had to cook, eat, and sleep in one room, and this may be due to the fact that she was accustomed to a completely different style of living in the North. Historian Gunther Barth argues that over time, in urban areas, housing evolved from one room to a separation between living and sleeping space, with multiple rooms. According to Barth, the separation of space led to the creation of crowded apartment housing, the new feature of which was the dining room—generally a very small room that was meant to have only one purpose, that of eating. Eveleth would certainly have been used to multiple-room housing, and the fact that she had to stay with a family in a single room dwelling could have reinforced her views of the “backwardness” of poor whites. In any event, Emma Eveleth never expressed pleasure with the style of living of either blacks or poor whites.<sup>30</sup>

Though Eveleth remarked often in her letters that both blacks and poor whites were seemingly destitute, it was not to say that either never sought employment. One year after she arrived in Jacksonville, in 1866, Eveleth noted that many of the freedmen in Jacksonville attempted to find work. As historian Joe M. Richardson has noted in his analysis of the Freedmen’s Bureau, one of the first goals of the Bureau was to aid the freedmen by providing

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. Grammatical errors original to letter.

<sup>30</sup> Gunther Barth, *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 51-52.

rations of food and clothing. Eveleth observed, however, that blacks “[seemed] to get work of some kind—little jobs around the docks, &c.—so they can live without aid. I believe there are none who receive rations, though some are very poor.”<sup>31</sup> The freedmen did receive some aid, as Eveleth and other missionaries often requested clothing and other goods from their headquarters in the North, which were shipped south.<sup>32</sup> Eveleth wrote that in her visits among the freedmen, she found them “as a people—ready and willing to work when they are paid for it.” Coming from the North, Eveleth would have been accustomed to people working for wages, and in this letter she demonstrates that this was the expectation of blacks, as well. She states that, “I don’t think they differ much in that respect from the white man, for there are very few—if any—that will work without pay.”<sup>33</sup>

For Eveleth, however, the question became not *if* the blacks were paid for their work, but *how* they were paid. How the freedmen received their wages frustrated Eveleth, and her concerns shed light on the post-slavery economy, as labor and compensation differed in the North and the South. Historian Jonathan M. Wiener notes that northern laborers, who were commonly migrant workers, were oppressed not by debt peonage characteristic of sharecropping in the South, but by seasonal unemployment which involved large travel expenses. These migrant workers, however, were paid in cash money either weekly or even daily.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Emma Eveleth to M. Hunt, 1 March 1866, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>32</sup> Joe M. Richardson, “An Evaluation of the Freedmen’s Bureau in Florida,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (Jan., 1963): 223-24.

<sup>33</sup> Eveleth to Hunt, 1 March 1866, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985). Underlines in original.

<sup>34</sup> Jonathan M. Wiener, “Bound Labor in Southern Agriculture,” in *Major Problems in the History of the American South, Volume II: The New South, Second Edition*, ed. Paul D. Escott, et al (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 74-75.

However, the characteristics of post-war labor were much different in the South. Wiener argues that with the downfall of the plantation economy, white landowners had to find new ways of controlling black labor. The freedmen expressed their wishes for paying jobs which would help them become recognized members of society. The sharecropping system arose out of this need, wherein blacks were tied to the land of white plantation owners. However, the freedmen were not paid in wages, but were given “credit” with which they could purchase goods in the town’s stores or even the plantation’s own stores. Many blacks, however, did not know the prices of the goods they wanted and thus were always in debt to their employers. This system of employment, therefore, kept blacks from controlling their money, and helped whites maintain control over them. Emma Eveleth made this observation about sharecropping in Gainesville, Florida in 1868:

There is not much justice or humanity among the southerners. Some of the parents of our children have told us how they have been employed by southerners to work on their farm & they would not pay them in money, but told them to go to the store & get what they wanted on their account. The freedmen, not realizing the price of the articles, would draw all their wages—sometimes more—before they were done, thus keeping them behind all the time—which pleases their enemys—for they have not been in the habit of handling money & economizing. We told them how much better it would be to have the money, then they would know what they were spending & could—perhaps—save a little every year, taking care to have the account come even at the end of the year, or else in their debt, so that the freedmen will be kept down till they are educated to stand up for their rights & not be imposed upon.<sup>35</sup>

This portion of Eveleth’s letter contains many important clues about her perception of the plight of the freedmen in Gainesville. The freedmen were not ignorant of money, but to Eveleth, they did not know how to conserve money in order to prepare for future needs. More importantly, however, this portion of the letter seems to show that Eveleth had little knowledge

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<sup>35</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. P. Smith, 30 December 1868, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University: 1985).

of how the post-bellum sharecropping system worked. While Eveleth told the freedmen that it would be better for them to have cash money, it is clear that a system of sharecropping was in place and blacks had little control over how they were compensated for their labor. To Eveleth, education would prepare the freedmen to demand fair treatment for themselves.

The employment situation of the poor whites in Jacksonville and Gainesville troubled Eveleth much more. She was of the opinion that “poor whites seem to be as much—or more—degraded & in need than the colored people.” She explained that the freedmen were not afraid to work, while “the others [poor whites] always thought work degrading...it seems as if they would starve rather than work.” While many reformers, including those of the Freedmen’s Bureau and some of the upper echelon of the American Missionary Association feared that blacks would become lazy or idle after Emancipation, the teachers in Florida remarked favorably upon the working habits of blacks. In May 1866, Eveleth recounted a visit by teachers from Georgia and South Carolina to her school in Jacksonville, which, in her opinion, demonstrated the changed attitudes of blacks toward the importance of labor:

Several of [the teachers] visited our school. One of the gentlemen talked to the children and asked them what Freedom meant, whether it was to be idle and have some one to take care of them. They said “no it is freedom to work.” He said “but you worked when you were slaves, what is the difference?” They said “we work now for ourselves.”<sup>36</sup>

In addition to money and employment concerns—worries fostered in a middle class environment—the missionaries were bothered by the freedmen’s lack of knowledge of or adherence to time. The management of time, to the missionaries, appears to have been one of the most important issues during their work in the South. School hours, meals, examination

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<sup>36</sup> Emma Eveleth to M. Hunt, 2 May 1866, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

exercises, visits to the freedmen's families, vacations—the teachers mapped all of these daily activities down to the hour. Emma Eveleth voiced many concerns about the tardiness of the students and the fluctuations in attendance during planting and harvest time.

As a native of Brooklyn, Emma Eveleth would have recognized Gunther Barth's description of a city as a "structured course of metropolitan life, primarily regulated by time clocks, streetcar schedules, and factory whistles."<sup>37</sup> British historian E. P. Thompson's masterful assessment of urbanization and time provides insight into how women like Emma Eveleth conceived of time and how she attempted to pass it on to her students. Thompson argues that with industrialization, people formed new concepts of time driven by many factors—"division of labor, supervision of labor, bells and clocks, money incentives, preachings and schoolings"—which formed new labor habits.<sup>38</sup> If one examines Eveleth's letters in the context of time, one can see that she was the product of an industrial society with a focus on the laboring middle class.

When Emma Eveleth first opened her school, the Union Academy in Gainesville, Florida, in 1870, one of the first items she appealed to the American Missionary Association for was a school bell. The Reverend Simeon Jocelyn, former abolitionist and executive committee member of the American Missionary Association, told her she could have one that could be heard over two miles away from the school house. Eveleth was quite pleased, as she was having a very difficult time keeping the students punctual. According to E. P. Thompson, punctuality showed respect not only for one's self but also for others, as tardiness could impact the success

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<sup>37</sup> Gunther Barth, *City People*, 19.

<sup>38</sup> E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38, no. 1 (1967): 90.

and duration of other's work. For Eveleth, punctuality showed that the students cared about their own studies, but also that they did not want to delay the start of school for the other students.<sup>39</sup>

Eveleth complained that she had a hard time keeping her students punctual, but she certainly tried to influence her students to arrive on time for school. In a letter dated February 1872, Eveleth wrote that she and her fellow teacher, Maggie Gardner, tried something new during the previous December in their quest to get the students to school on time. They looked over their roster,

... To see how many had no tardy marks against their names for the last term. And out of one hundred and fifty there was only seven who had not been tardy, come only once, but enough to say they were tardy. We invited them to take dinner with us New Years Day. Told them all why we invited them. They were delighted to come and many others hung around the house as though they wished to come in....<sup>40</sup>

Emma Eveleth and other teachers expressed particular displeasure with the seasonal fluctuations of their students' attendance. They specifically noted that during planting and harvest time, their attendance dropped significantly. Harriet Greely wrote from St. Augustine before transferring to Jacksonville, "The scholars were progressing finely till the time for preparing the ground and planting came on about the last of March, when they nearly all took to the field. Until now their fields, together with the family cares of the women, have required about all their time." Greely wrote further that for the most part, the "scholars" had taken their books with them, and when they had a spare moment, they tried to complete their studies. In

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<sup>39</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. P. Smith, 23 May 1870, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University: 1985); Thompson, "Time, Work Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," 96.

<sup>40</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 1 February 1872, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

general, Greely seemed quite accepting of their requirements on their time, but Emma Eveleth expressed greater frustration.<sup>41</sup>

Being from urban areas, Greely and Eveleth were clearly unaccustomed to the time constraints of agricultural work. Historian Gunther Barth argues that “the metropolitan setting was out of touch with the agricultural world that each year experienced anew planting, ripening, and harvesting as part of a harmonious cycle.”<sup>42</sup> E. P. Thompson has examined this conflict between urban and rural, naming it “task orientation.” He defines three basic elements for a task-orientation work cycle. The first is that the laborer tends to what is perceived as an “observed necessity,” like planting in order to grow crops to sell. Second, in areas where “task orientation” is the method of work, there is no division between socializing and labor. Third, someone not accustomed to “task orientation” would see this method of labor as “wasteful and lacking in urgency.”<sup>43</sup>

Emma Eveleth certainly was unfamiliar with a task orientation work cycle. She wrote in March 1873,

You will notice that our school is not quite so large or the average this month on account of planting, for many of these people think their bread is of the highest importance that must be raised at the expense of an education and I think some intelligent people think so, I am glad all are not so shortsighted, there are some who will not let anything keep their children from school.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> H. B. Greely to G. Whipple, 29 April 1864, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>42</sup> Barth, *City People*, 19.

<sup>43</sup> Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” 60.

<sup>44</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 25 March 1873, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

Clearly, Eveleth felt that it was more important for the children to go to school than to help their parents with planting. Eveleth also complained that some of her best scholars were hired out seasonally to local southerners, who often kept them working all day. She wrote,

I hope the others will see the advantage of it when they find these steady ones are improving so much faster than their children, for they are all very anxious that their children should have a good education but they don't seem to realize that it requires time, industry, and perseverance. Being ignorant themselves it is not expected that their darkened minds, can see more than a glimmer of the light of knowledge. But we try... to give them light on the subject of education... and that education is more to them than all the crops they can make.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to their views on hygiene, labor, and time management, the northern women in Florida during Reconstruction advocated temperance for the freedmen. Creating temperance societies—where the women encouraged the rejection of “immoral” behaviors, such as drinking, smoking, gambling, and swearing—became one of the main goals of the northern teachers. Historian Jacqueline Jones has argued that northern teachers in the South felt they must increase the “moral sense” of the freedmen, because the conditions of slavery had decreased their moral aptitude. Florida teachers accomplished this not only in their regular church gatherings, but in monthly temperance meetings held in their school houses.<sup>46</sup>

Historian Douglas W. Carlson has explored the origins of the temperance movement in the United States. The temperance debate concerns Protestant revivalism versus northern modernization. Carlson states that the earliest historians of temperance focused on the Second Great Awakening, during which religious leaders called on temperance in order to increase moral and spiritual awareness. The more recent historiography, however, suggests that the rise of the

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<sup>45</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 29 May 1873, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>46</sup> Jacqueline Jones, *Soldiers of Light and Love: Northern Teachers and Georgia Blacks, 1865-1873* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 140-41.



temperance movement can be attributed to northern industrialization and urbanization. Carlson argues that citizens of northern urban centers responded to changes in the economy by increasing the importance of temperance amid calls for “moral perfection” and the new demands of a changing society. Being that the northern teachers lived and worked in rural areas in the South, they brought their views about temperance as a product of industrialization and urbanization from the North to Florida.<sup>47</sup>

Some historians have noted that a southern temperance movement was at work in the South, separate from the northern temperance advocates. It is important to distinguish between the two movements. Lee Willis has argued that particularly in Florida, women did not play a large role in public affairs and therefore were denied a political voice, which led to little involvement in the temperance movement. He states that the status of southern women actually declined throughout the nineteenth century, whereas in the North, women had started to advocate for their rights and slowly began creating their own public voice. The northern American Missionary Association teachers in Florida, therefore, brought their advocacy for temperance from the North to the freedmen in places like Gainesville and Monticello, areas where southern women remained relatively quiet in the public sphere.<sup>48</sup>

In *Women in Public*, Mary Ryan argues that beginning in the 1840s, women, particularly in the North, become recognized symbols of public ceremony, in their attendance at spectator events, such as parades and speeches. In the 1850s and 1860s, as women gained a larger presence in society, they began to hold public events, especially on holidays, during which they

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<sup>47</sup> Douglas W. Carlson, “‘Drinks He to His Own Undoing’: Temperance Ideology in the Deep South,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 18, no. 4 (Winter, 1998): 660-62.

<sup>48</sup> Lee L. Willis, III, “The Road to Prohibition: Religion and Political Culture in Middle Florida, 1821-1920” (Ph. D. diss., Florida State University, 2006), 2-5.

sang songs, recited poetry, and acted out skits pertaining to temperance. While women never marched in such grand spectacles as parades, Ryan believes that their presence was felt, in such ways as through banners carried by young men which stated that “Everything’s alright--Dad’s sober.” Ryan believes that temperance increasingly became linked to domestic happiness, which was reinforced during and after the Civil War. While it is true that after the Civil War, southern women became much more present in the public sphere, Ryan believes that northern women had a greater presence much earlier, during the antebellum years. As will be seen, the northern women in Florida expressed beliefs that abstinence from alcohol and tobacco could greatly improve the lives of the freedmen and poor whites.<sup>49</sup>

Historian Jed Dannenbaum has also analyzed the origins of the women’s temperance movement, particularly during the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Dannenbaum argues that after 1850, the influx of immigrants into the United States divided the nation into “drinkers and abstainers.” He believes that an altered social climate threatened the homes and moralities of women’s families. During the Civil War and Reconstruction, drinking increased, providing more opportunity for men to break their temperance pledges and not only drink, but gamble and engage in sexual promiscuity. Women therefore began to take charge of the temperance movement, according to Dannenbaum, in order to protect their families from lapses in morality. Two women, Carrie M. Blood and Emma Eveleth, worked for years to engage the freedmen in the temperance movement, expressing the above ideals.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880*, The Johns Hopkins Symposia in Comparative History, 16<sup>th</sup> (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 31-37.

<sup>50</sup>Jed Dannenbaum, “The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy among American Women,” *Journal of Social History* 15, no. 2 (Winter, 1981): 241, 244.

Though the American Missionary Association was responsible for many of the teachers in Florida, some of them had previously worked for the Freedmen's Bureau. The bureau organized the Vanguard of Freedom, which was a southern temperance society for freed slaves.<sup>51</sup> Very little has been written on this organization, so it is difficult to analyze the purposes behind its formation. It is referenced sporadically in the *American Missionary*, the monthly publication of the American Missionary Association. One entry from Georgia in June 1868 described the formation of the Vanguard of Freedom. The observer, W. L. Clark, wrote:

To obtain signers of the pledge is an easy matter, but to find men in this part of the country, where spirits and tobacco are so generally used, who can and will keep their promises, is a little more difficult... We are about to do so, however; next month we organize, choose officers, and a few are going to enlist under our banner as soldiers of the 'Vanguard of Freedom.'<sup>52</sup>

One teacher, Carrie M. Blood, referenced the Vanguard of Freedom during her time teaching in Monticello, Florida. Blood wrote to the Reverend E. P. Smith stating that she and other teachers discussed starting a "much needed" temperance society in the town for the freedmen. Blood had some experience in starting a society as part of the Vanguard of Freedom during her time in Raleigh, North Carolina, and would therefore name her Florida chapter "An Association of the Vanguard of Freedom." Certainly, Blood wished to follow the example of the Freedmen's Bureau, but she hesitated to specify the name "until we know who will be its patrons." Being that the Vanguard of Freedom was designated for only freed slaves, Blood might have had to change the name if she had encouraged whites to join.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> See Nina Mjagkij, ed., *Organizing Black America: An Encyclopedia of African American Associations* (New York: Garland, 2001), 131.

<sup>52</sup> W. L. Clark, "The Interior of Georgia," *American Missionary* 12, no. 6 (June, 1868): 126.

<sup>53</sup> Carrie M. Blood to E. P. Smith, 24 October 1869, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

Blood wrote that she had twenty-five day pupils who signed up for the temperance society, but it would be a “leap in the dark” to make it successful. Without funding for reading materials or to hold meetings, Blood worried that the temperance society would fail. She noted that a white mechanic donated candles for the walls of the meeting room, but that was nearly the extent of the aid they had received. Blood and her fellow teachers, however, believed that “God helps those who help themselves,” and expressed faith that they would receive some northern benevolence with which to start their temperance society.<sup>54</sup>

Emma Eveleth encouraged the freedmen to join the temperance movement and give up alcohol and tobacco. Beginning in 1870, she started a temperance society which met monthly, and generally gained members at every meeting. In her letters, Eveleth seemed pleased at the success of the society, which served both adults and children. However, in February 1871, Eveleth appeared particularly disappointed in how the society was progressing, writing:

Our temperance society is not standing well, the leaven is spreading, not only in this town, but the surrounding ones. Some of our members have branched off & are true to their pledge working for the cause of hope every teacher among the freedmen & others too will put forth every effort in the cause of temperance, for knowledge & religion cannot triumph without it. The freedmen as a general thing are poor & they spend a great deal for liquor & tobacco which keeps them poor & those who use it think they must have it at all hazards, even if their families suffer for the necessities of life, so that we cannot be too earnest for their temperal [sic] and spiritual welfare.<sup>55</sup>

The above statement demonstrates that Eveleth wanted the freedmen to show temperance not only for their health, but also for their economic status. Eveleth took particular offense to tobacco. In her letters, she recounted some stories where she urged freedmen to join the society, but freedmen told her that they would join if it were not for the requirement that they had to give

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Emma B. Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 25 February 1871, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

up tobacco. Some explained to her that tobacco was their “comfort,” to which Eveleth replied that “they must get their comfort from God & his word.” While encouraging abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, the teachers sought to draw the freedmen toward being better Christians.<sup>56</sup>

Some freedmen accepted, while others rejected, the temperance ideas brought by the northern teachers. In many of her letters, Emma Eveleth noted that out of the thirty or so names they gathered at each temperance meeting, there were only three or four men who would break their temperance pledges. Eveleth was particularly pleased in February 1873 when she received letters from two former students who swore that they remained abstinent. One former student had moved to Fernandina, Florida, while another went to Europe as a sailor. Eveleth wrote that “if he can be a sailor, with so many temptations around him, and not violate his pledge, then the principles we tried to instill in his mind, must have taken deep root. So that in laboring in this little out of the way place, the influence may be felt across the ocean.”<sup>57</sup>

As successful as the temperance society seems to have been, a common complaint of Emma Eveleth and her fellow teachers in Gainesville was that the freedmen were unable or unwilling to hold temperance meetings on their own. In a letter from November 1872, Eveleth complained that during the prior year’s summer vacation, she had instructed the freedmen to keep their meetings going and to “make them interesting.” She stated that the brother of James Chestnut, one of the school’s prominent alumni, “was faithful and did his part. Called a meeting and waited two hours but only a few children came so there was no meeting during vacations

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<sup>56</sup> Emma B. Eveleth, to E. M. Cravath, 28 May 1871, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>57</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 26 February 1873, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

though there is plenty for them to do.”<sup>58</sup> Eveleth seemed particularly disappointed that the freedmen were unable to “lean upon themselves for we cannot always be with them.”<sup>59</sup>

The northern teachers saw the children as their best hope for moral and social uplift, and this is particularly true in the case of the temperance movement. Historian Jed Dannenbaum argues that women wanted to lead by example, by developing “strong teetotal principles” in their children. Emma Eveleth certainly placed particular emphasis of temperance on her young students. In December 1872, she organized “temperance entertainment” consisting of songs and speeches in order to benefit her Sabbath school. White patrons were so impressed by the program that they asked her to repeat it—and as Eveleth hints in her letter, these white patrons were quite fond of alcohol themselves. In general, however, she appealed to Reverend E. M. Cravath the important work of the temperance society in Gainesville, writing that “There is hardly a white southerner but what drinks, and some northerners but our hope is in the children, many of them are strong teetotalers, and I hope will make good temperance men and women, sending a tide of influence over the whole population.”<sup>60</sup> The children express “a good deal of zeal, most of them are good workers in the cause.”<sup>61</sup> Many of the children would “tattle” on those who broke the pledge, in order that Eveleth and others could try to encourage them to return to abstinence. From her letters, it appears that Eveleth believed that teaching the children about temperance was the best way to prevent immoral behavior among the freedmen.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 29 November 1872, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 31 December 1872, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>61</sup> Emma Eveleth to E. M. Cravath, 27 March 1872, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>62</sup> Dannenbaum, “Origins of Temperance Activism,” 239.

The women of the American Missionary Association were one of the earliest groups of northerners to come to areas of Florida such as Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello. From their letters, it is clear that the culture of southern society was much different than their experiences of culture in the North. Using northern concepts of race, employment, working habits, punctuality, and temperance, the women attempted to make sense of the unfamiliar beliefs and behaviors they encountered with the freedmen and poor whites in north Florida. However, the women believed that their ideas of proper society would greatly influence the success of African Americans in Florida in the future.

## CHAPTER TWO

During Reconstruction, many northern African Americans came south in order to aid in the education of the freedmen. Both former slaves and free black men followed Union armies into the South, while others came representing northern religious institutions. Many came of their own accord, taking up new residences among the major cities of the southern states. One of the cities to which black northerners came was Jacksonville, Florida. The city of Jacksonville presents an interesting opportunity for a case study in the interaction between northern free blacks and southern freed blacks because Jacksonville's African Americans accounted for more than half of the city's overall population during Reconstruction, and was a major hub for northern and southern travelers of leisure and business.<sup>63</sup>

Of particular interest is how free black northerners from the African Methodist Episcopal Church regarded the status of Jacksonville's freed black population during Reconstruction. Using their letters to the *Christian Recorder*, the newspaper of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, it is possible to understand how northern African American Methodists interpreted the state of industry, temperance, and education in Jacksonville in the context of citizenship and its meaning to the nation's African Americans. In this chapter, I will attempt to show that the northern African American Methodists who came to Jacksonville during Reconstruction responded to the plight of the freedmen by using northern ideas of society including industry, voting rights, labor, and education to encourage the uplift of their race.

The interaction between northern free blacks and southern freed blacks has been little studied by historians. Historian William Toll has argued that northern and southern blacks

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<sup>63</sup> Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 206-207.



experienced a “cultural reunion” following the end of the Civil War. Northern blacks had “sponsored moral-reform, temperance... and supported their own schools” among their race in the North, but they now faced the uncertainty of what would happen to their southern counterparts, the freedmen. Northern blacks faced the difficult challenge of constant bombardment from whites and Europeans who presented southern blacks as uncivilized, uneducated, and ill-prepared for the status of citizenship in the United States. Many black writers concurred with the idea that a lack of education prevented southern blacks from full knowledge of their roles as citizens. For most northern blacks, the conclusion of the Civil War had brought an end to the terrible institution of slavery, but new concerns arose over how to gain the rights of citizenship for all African Americans.<sup>64</sup>

One of the main groups of northern African Americans to come south during Reconstruction was the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The organization had been started by a young freed slave named Richard Allen in the city of Philadelphia in the late 1780s. Allen had preached with a biracial Methodist Episcopal Church, but had to split from the church when white landowners voiced concerns about having blacks as part of the congregation. He soon began preaching to Philadelphia’s free black population, which had been criticized by northern whites as bereft of civility and religion. Historian James T. Campbell states that by the time that Allen died in 1831, the African Methodist Episcopal Church operated in all of the northern states and some southern ones. Campbell writes that even in the earliest days of African Methodism, Richard Allen believed that “frugality, temperance, industry, and other classic Methodist virtues represented more than a means to eventual salvation; they provided a formula by which blacks

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<sup>64</sup> William Toll, “Free Men, Freedmen, and Race: Black Social Theory in the Gilded Age,” *The Journal of Southern History* 44, no. 4 (Nov., 1978): 571-74.

could lift themselves up from their impoverished, degraded state.” It was on these basic principles of the northern white Methodist Episcopal Church that northern agents of the African Methodist Episcopal Church based their efforts to aid the freedmen during Reconstruction.<sup>65</sup>

At the end of the Civil War, a large presence of African American followers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church arrived in Jacksonville to begin the process of aiding the freedmen. They seemed to have been drawn to Jacksonville for a variety of reasons. In 1868, Philadelphia’s Mary Still wrote that Jacksonville was “a city of considerable notoriety.” In July 1875, the Reverend John R. Scott, Sr., considered to be one of the founding members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Florida, wrote to the *Christian Recorder* that “the accessibility of Jacksonville [made it] the place, and the only place in our opinion, that our conference can erect and support an institution of learning.”<sup>66</sup> In January 1876, African Methodist minister Norman Bascom Sterrett, who had been born in Maryland to free parents but served in the Union Army during the Civil War, wrote that “Jacksonville is the metropolis of Florida, and in a few years it will favorably compare with some of our northern cities.”<sup>67</sup>

In 1867, Mary Still, a prominent African American resident of Philadelphia, came to Jacksonville in order to help with the freedmen’s aid movement. Born in 1809 in New Jersey, Still was one of eighteen children of former slaves. She was closely connected to the African Methodist Episcopal Church and its newspaper, the *Christian Recorder*.<sup>68</sup> After the Civil War

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<sup>65</sup> James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 9-11.

<sup>66</sup> John R. Scott, Sr. was born around 1840 in Virginia. Though his ties to the North cannot be directly traced, he did interact with many northern African Methodist ministers who came to Florida during Reconstruction; John R. Scott, Sr., “From Florida,” *Christian Recorder*, 8 July 1875.

<sup>67</sup> Mary Still, “Letter from Jacksonville, Fla.,” *Christian Recorder*, 16 May 1868; N. Bascom Sterrett, “Our Florida Letter,” *Christian Recorder*, 27 January 1876.

<sup>68</sup> C. Peter Ripley, et al, eds., *The Black Abolitionist Papers, Volume IV: The United States, 1847-1858* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 58-60.

ended, Mary Still saw that many African Americans were in need not only in the North, but in the South. In September of 1864, Still wrote to the American Missionary Association seeking employment in the South, expressing her desire to aid in the efforts to educate the freedmen:

I desire to get a situation in a primary School in some of the southern districts if possible... I wish a school in connection with the A M E church as I am a member of that order. I have taught school for several years in the lower branches and have been made very useful in various places in Sabbath Schools as well as the day school. I feel a desire to spend my time in that way as there are so many to be taught at this time.<sup>69</sup>

Though Still did not work for an institution representing the African Methodist Episcopal Church, she was given a position by the American Missionary Association in Beaufort, South Carolina, from 1865 until 1867, when she began teaching in Jacksonville, Florida.<sup>70</sup>

In May of 1868, Mary Still wrote a letter to the *Christian Recorder* in which she made observations about how the city of Jacksonville was faring during Reconstruction. She wrote that upon her arrival in 1867, “Most of the important places of business had been destroyed... The whole city was in a dilapidated condition. The people seemed distrustful and uneasy; great uncertainty rested in the minds of businessmen.” However, at the time she wrote the letter, she could see great changes taking place in the city. The residents of Jacksonville were “aspiring, cheerful, and hopeful.” New building construction had increased greatly, “[more than she] ever saw before at any place.” Still’s comments upon the plight of Jacksonville’s businessmen demonstrate her awareness of industry, which she would have gained from living in the North. As a resident of Philadelphia, business and industry would have surrounded Still in her everyday life, so much so that she could readily identify that Jacksonville’s businesses had suffered due to

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<sup>69</sup> Mary Still to the Board of the American Missionary Association, 25 September 1864, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>70</sup> C. Peter Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 59.

the war. However, she believed that the people of Jacksonville had made many improvements since her arrival in the city.<sup>71</sup>

One of Still's observations concerning the young African American population in Jacksonville sheds light on her perception of their access to rights and citizenship in the South.

In the letter, Still wrote:

Our schools are doing well, but we want more teachers. Young men will have a chance to develop their manhood, which they, as a general thing, cannot do in the North. Young women can contribute more to building up their race out here than they can in the North. They should not be afraid to come, as all are safe now. There is much work to be done.<sup>72</sup>

Clearly, Still wanted to encourage northern African American men and women to come to Florida to help educate the freedmen, and she believed that they would have greater access to rights in the South than in the North. A possible explanation for this could be that in the North, blacks and whites had largely grown accustomed to their interactions in society, with forms and customs to be followed. This is not to say that this relationship was equal or fair by any means—certainly, it was not. Historian Eric Foner has argued that despite the rapid advances that northern blacks made during Reconstruction, prejudice hindered northern black access to suffrage or other civil rights. Foner states that the majority of northern blacks were poor and unskilled, and “black politicians lacked the militancy of their Southern counterparts, and failed to develop a viable strategy for addressing the economic plight of their community.” Many of these blacks fell under a system of patronage from white politicians.<sup>73</sup>

While northern blacks had grown relatively accustomed to their positions as free men in the North, the relationship between southern whites and blacks in the South was much less

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<sup>71</sup> Mary Still, “Letter from Jacksonville, Fla.,” *Christian Recorder*, 16 May 1868.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Eric Foner, *Reconstruction*, 471-72.

certain. Mary Still seems to have thought that there was much greater opportunity for northern black men to gain rights for themselves and southern black men during the period of military occupation in Florida.<sup>74</sup> The connection between manhood, which Still references, and citizenship has been made by historians such as Kevin Gaines, who argues that manhood was directly tied to citizenship. In the nineteenth century, access to political rights was considered a “masculine domain.” Gaines cites black activist W. E. B. Du Bois, who believed that the development of “strong manhood and pure womanhood” would serve to “uplift” the African American race. Gaines also believes that the constant appeal made by black leaders to “develop manhood” which Still called for was tied to the “powerlessness” of blacks in a culture driven by prejudice and bigotry by whites.<sup>75</sup>

It is important to comment upon the meaning of “manhood” and political rights to Mary Still, who, as a black woman, did not have “manhood.” Mary Still expressed great interest in northern black men securing their right to vote, even though the concept of “manhood” and citizenship did not permit her to vote. Historian Elsa Barkley Brown has argued that the disfranchisement of black women in South Carolina and the rest of the South did not prevent them from participating in political activities. She states that black women believed that they played a vital role in black men’s right to vote, and often accompanied their spouses to the voting booths to influence their voting choices. Brown believes that “African American men and women understood the vote as a collective, not an individual, possession, and that... African American women, unable to cast a separate vote, viewed African American men’s vote as

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<sup>74</sup> Military reconstruction in Florida lasted from March 15, 1867, to July 4, 1868. Merlin G. Cox, “Military Reconstruction in Florida,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (Jan., 1968): 219.

<sup>75</sup> Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 52.

equally theirs.”<sup>76</sup> Mary Still’s encouragement of northern blacks developing their “manhood” in the South, then, can be explained as her recognition that the right to vote was important to *all* African Americans, even if only men held the power to legally vote.

The Reverend John R. Scott, Sr. also addressed the issue of “manhood” and voting in Jacksonville in a letter to the *Christian Recorder* in 1877. As Kevin Gaines has argued, “manhood” was directly tied to citizenship. Most blacks believed that an education would lead to citizenship, and ultimately the right to vote—a right which black men had gained with the ratification of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment in February 1870.<sup>77</sup> In his letter, Scott commented upon the actions of Florida’s Democratic Party during the winter of 1876:

Our new Democratic State Administration, lost a grand opportunity by not fulfilling their pledges to their people during the sixty days session of the Legislature last winter. However, the Negroes will not complain if greater protection for life, and property, and educational advantages are secured as promised by the Democrats during the campaign. The negro voters of Florida will always co-operate with that party which acknowledges his manhood and respects his right to an equal chance with the Anglo-Saxon race, in being what he can be.<sup>78</sup>

Clearly, Scott wanted Jacksonville’s African Americans to stand up for their rights as citizens. Scott demanded the respect of Florida’s political parties for blacks, because it would demonstrate that to some degree, whites saw equality with blacks politically. Unfortunately, much of Scott’s hopes for equality in the right to vote would not come to fruition, but he felt that it was an important topic to address with the readers of the *Christian Recorder*.

The African American men also brought with them northern ideas of temperance, industry, and education, all of which they viewed as necessary to the social uplift of

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<sup>76</sup> Elsa Barkley Brown, “To Catch the Vision of Freedom: Reconstructing Southern Black Women’s Political History, 1865-1880,” in *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, eds., Ann D. Gordon, et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 80, 82.

<sup>77</sup> Gaines, *Uplifting the Race*, 52.

<sup>78</sup> Scott, *Christian Recorder*, 31 May 1877.

Jacksonville's freedmen and key to citizenship. Of particular concern for these men was the issue of temperance. The black temperance movement as a whole has been little addressed by historians. In 1969, historian Benjamin Quarles argued that northern black abolitionists linked abstinence with abolition. Quarles wrote that since many blacks were poor, they were more likely to drink as a method of escape from difficult or stressful lives. Realizing this, black abolitionists argued that failure to remain sober was like promoting slavery. He states that "Drinking and slavery in the eyes of Negro reformers, were twin symbols of the moral decay of the times." Connecting abstinence to abolition would hopefully draw support from not only other blacks, but whites as well. Quarles acknowledges, however, that among African Americans, the temperance movement was characterized by a lack of follow-through or interest, depending on the location of the movement. African American temperance advocates also had to contend with white temperance leaders, who did not want blacks as part of their organizations.<sup>79</sup>

Historians Jane and William Pease have argued that the temperance movement fit in well with the other northern reform movements typical of the 1830s and 1840s. They state that black abolitionists turned to temperance because "abstinence so well represented the moral uplift and social control which lay at the heart of much antebellum reform."<sup>80</sup> Like Quarles, the Peases believe that black abolitionists discouraged drinking among their race because it was akin to slavery itself. While Quarles and the Peases link temperance to abolition, other historians see the temperance movement as a middle-class preoccupation. Historian Frederick Cooper has argued that black leaders concerned themselves with temperance because the movement was closely

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<sup>79</sup> Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 92-97.

<sup>80</sup> Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease, *They Who Would Be Free: Blacks' Search for Freedom, 1830-1861*, Studies in American Negro Life (New York: Atheneum, 1974), 124-25.

connected to social status. According to Cooper, “Temperance symbolized the gulf between the respectable middle class and the degraded lower class.”<sup>81</sup> Black leaders were so concerned with temperance because they wanted to be viewed as members of the middle class, and so even the slightest indulgence by poor blacks could bring an unwanted stereotype among African Americans. As such, black abolitionists attempted to enforce the importance of abstinence, along with morality and education.<sup>82</sup>

African American ministers who had been born in or were educated in the North brought the temperance movement to Florida, writing about the cause from places such as Tallahassee, Lake City, and St. Augustine. Reverend John R. Scott, Sr. was based in Jacksonville and was actively involved in the temperance movement there. According to historians Larry Rivers and Canter Brown, Scott, along with other A. M. E. ministers Alfred W. Walker and James C. Waters, encouraged the founding of temperance lodges across North Florida by the organization known as the International Order of Good Templars (IOGT). In May 1877, Scott wrote a letter to the *Christian Recorder* discussing the success of the temperance movement in Florida, stating that, “The condition of our people temporally is full of encouragement, and I am more impressed than ever before that the ‘Land of Flowers’ ... which responds well to cultivation, is the land for the poor man.”<sup>83</sup>

African Methodist minister Alfred W. Walker, who had been involved in the establishment of the IOGT lodge in Jacksonville, also wrote to the *Christian Recorder* about the

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<sup>81</sup> Frederick Cooper, “Elevating the Race: The Social Thought of Black Leaders, 1827-50,” *American Quarterly* 24, no. 5 (Dec., 1972): 615.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> John R. Scott, Sr., “Church and Things in Florida,” *Christian Recorder*, 31 May 1877; Larry Eugene Rivers and Canter Brown, *Laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord: The Beginnings of the AME Church in Florida, 1865-1895* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 44, 104-105.



temperance movement in Jacksonville. In September 1877 he wrote that Thomas D. Scott, son of John R. Scott, Sr., gave a speech on temperance at the IOGT lodge in Jacksonville that “made our hearts rejoice and strengthened our souls in the glorious cause of temperance.” He wrote further:

The temperance cause is one that can not [sic] be too much written about... For believe me sir, it has done more for our people in Jacksonville than anything else, the gospel excepted. For, as a visitor who was spending a few days in our city remarked, there were less drunkenness in this city than any other he had before visited.<sup>84</sup>

Walker then commented upon the parades held by the local black churches that were intended to draw the young and old into their “temperance army, the arms of which we never intend to ‘stack’ until we succeed in closing the last drinking saloon in our beautiful Land of Flowers.” For Walker and his colleague Scott, temperance played a very important role in the uplift and education of Jacksonville’s freedmen.<sup>85</sup>

Black northerners in Jacksonville also wrote to the *Christian Recorder* about industry and capital, their ideas about which having been shaped by living in such industrial environments as Philadelphia and New York City. Native Floridian and black activist Timothy Thomas Fortune wrote to the *Christian Recorder* about the increase in capital and competition in Jacksonville. Fortune had been born in Florida in 1856 and had an early education at Stanton Institute, but spent much of his young adult life in the North, in Delaware and New York City.<sup>86</sup> The influence of northern industrialism on his views about life in Jacksonville can be seen in the following excerpt from a letter dated April 1877:

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<sup>84</sup> Alfred W. Walker, “About Many Things,” *Christian Recorder*, 13 September 1877.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Timothy Thomas Fortune was the founder of the prolific northern black newspaper, the *New York Age*. Donald E. Drake, II, “Militancy in Fortune’s *New York Age*,” *The Journal of Negro History* 55, no. 4 (Oct., 1970): 307.

... All types of the human family favor us with their presence, which, as a sequential, necessitates accommodations, that their stay may be rendered pleasurable and beneficial. Our hotels are crowded to their utmost capacity all winter, and as is natural, many of those... conclude to dwell among us; thus adding activity, capital, and competition to where was formerly apathy, disinterestedness, and a dirth [sic] of capital, the want of which will make poor any community...<sup>87</sup>

Fortune made a clear link between the visits of northerners to Florida, and an increase of wealth in the city. In July 1877 he commented that “debts are, and being liquidated.”<sup>88</sup> Fortune saw promise in business ventures that would encourage the growth of capital and industry.

The Reverend John R. Scott, Sr. also commented upon the labor conditions of the freedmen in Jacksonville, at the same time that Fortune saw growth in the city’s business district. Scott spoke of the criticism of many white southerners that the blacks did not want to work:

It has been said that the negro here will not work, that they are becoming indolent and vicious. The facts are, they have become tired of working without pay. Planters and others who fulfill their promises to pay them for their labor, have no difficulty in getting them to work. But those who have considered it their God-given right to swindle the negro out of the hard earned money due him are left without help. The people of Florida have learned that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and only demands a fair remuneration for his *services*.<sup>89</sup>

Scott’s comments upon the perception of “laziness” of southern blacks are not unique. As one influenced by northern ideas, Scott seems to have recognized that many blacks were not simply not being paid for their labor—thus, refusing to work altogether. Historian Eric Foner has studied the problems that blacks faced in the post-emancipation southern economy. He argues that while blacks did expect to work less than they had under slavery, by no means were the freedmen lazy. Blacks not only wanted to earn their own wages, but they ultimately wanted to own a piece of their own land and work for themselves. Foner states that, “Without land,

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<sup>87</sup> T. T. Fortune, “Florida Correspondence,” *Christian Recorder*, 26 April 1877.

<sup>88</sup> T. T. Fortune, “Florida Correspondence,” *Christian Recorder*, 5 July 1877.

<sup>89</sup> Scott, *Christian Recorder*, 31 May 1877. Italics in original.

there could be no economic autonomy.” Because it was difficult for blacks to own their own land, many refused employment if it involved working for white southerners or came with no guarantee of wages. Reverend Scott, however, could recognize that many southern blacks sought autonomy.<sup>90</sup>

Arguably, the main goal for northern African Americans in Jacksonville, with the exception of religious conversion of the freedmen, was education. As previously stated, for the northern blacks in Jacksonville, gaining a proper education was seen as the necessary path for achieving civil rights. In particular, Mary Still hoped to advance the lives of Jacksonville’s African American population through education. Still’s employment by the American Missionary Association in Jacksonville is somewhat unique because she is generally believed to have been the oldest unmarried black teacher anywhere in the South. She was well over middle-aged by the time she began teaching in Florida. Mary Still is also one of only two known African American A. M. A. teachers in Florida, the other being Anna H. Kidder, who taught in Ocala, Florida, in the early 1870s.<sup>91</sup>

Unfortunately, no letters have been found from Mary Still that reflect upon her time as a teacher in Jacksonville. However, a series of monthly school reports to the American Missionary Association do survive, and provide some insight into the number of students and skills that Still taught. Upon moving to Jacksonville, Mary Still began teaching at Stanton Institute, a school for African American students that had been in operation since 1868. Still taught with Celia and Philomena Williams, northern white women who were sisters and who had been hired by the A.

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<sup>90</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 101-102.

<sup>91</sup> Clara Merritt DeBoer, *His Truth is Marching On: African Americans Who Taught the Freedmen for the American Missionary Association, 1861-1877*, Studies in African American History and Culture (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1995), 213-14.

M. A. to run the school. Still's school reports are available intermittently between December 1869 and May 1871. They indicate that she taught the "Primary" or "Second Primary" class, which would have consisted of the youngest children. With the exception of November 1869, Still's class averaged a monthly attendance of sixty children, with a relatively balanced attendance between boys and girls.<sup>92</sup>

Though Still had a high number of attendees in her class, it appears that she had a much more difficult time maintaining the presence of her students in the classroom and their punctuality. For example, in her report for January 1870, Still reported a total monthly enrollment of 64 students, an average attendance of 44 students, and just 17 students who always arrived on time for class.<sup>93</sup> Punctuality seems to have been a major focus of the American Missionary Association. As British labor historian E. P. Thompson has written, in an industrialized society, punctuality showed respect for one's fellow workers. In the case of the A. M. A., being punctual to class would demonstrate respect for the time needed for the learning of others.<sup>94</sup>

Unfortunately, after December 1870 the school reports only discuss attendance, presence, and punctuality and do not include information about the curriculum. Mary Still's reports from November 1869 to May 1870, however, show that all of her students knew the alphabet and were learning to read and spell. It does not appear that her students were learning any other subjects,

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<sup>92</sup> In November 1869, Mary Still had approximately 119 students in her class, twice the normal amount, due to the fact that Stanton had not employed the "usual" number of teachers.; Mary Still, "Teachers Monthly School Report for the Month of November, 1869," in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>93</sup> Mary Still did not suffer this problem alone; most of the other A. M. A. teachers reported a high total monthly enrollment, but low average attendance and an even lower number of punctual students.

<sup>94</sup> Mary Still, "Teachers Monthly School Report for the Month of January, 1870," in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985); Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," 96.

although she did report that one student was learning geography in May 1870. Because Still taught the youngest students enrolled in Stanton, they may not have been instructed in other lessons such as advanced reading, arithmetic, or geography.<sup>95</sup>

In 1877, Timothy Thomas Fortune wrote a concerned letter to the *Christian Recorder*, in which he commented upon the state of education in Jacksonville and the South in general. He wrote:

No casual observer of our southern nature can fail to have noted the culpable neglect of education, so visibly stamped on most everything; a neglect which has amounted in many instances, to cool and sinful indifference. I say it with regret that these cast-a-way of opportunities has resulted largely in densely populated penitentiaries laxitive [sic] morals, and poor knowledge of the qualities of citizenship.<sup>96</sup>

Here, Fortune directly connects the importance of education to citizenship. Without an education, the freedmen would have little knowledge of what it meant to be an American citizen. Fortune also objected to segregation in the classroom. Historian Eric Foner has argued that after the establishment of schools for blacks, it was incredibly difficult to convince white southerners, and to some extent, white northerners, to integrate whites and blacks into the same schools. As Foner states, racially mixed schools were not common in the North. Foner believes that while many blacks would have agreed that segregation could make blacks feel or seem inferior, many could not propose a “practicable” solution to the problem.<sup>97</sup> In 1877, T. Thomas Fortune voiced his concerns with segregated schools:

Separate schools are detrimental to the cause of intelligence. They necessitate heavier taxation and cause one portion of American citizens to grow to manhood under the ruinous delusion that they are mentally superior to the other portion; when all candid men

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<sup>95</sup> Mary Still, “Teachers Monthly School Report,” November 1869, December 1869, January 1870, February 1870, March 1870, May 1870, in *American Missionary Association Archives: Florida* (New Orleans, La.: Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, 1985).

<sup>96</sup> T. T. Fortune, “Our Florida Correspondent,” *Christian Recorder*, 24 May 1877.

<sup>97</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 366-67.

know that the deference is in opportunity and not superiority... We want educated masters, and them we must have! Until we have them, endeavor will be wasted energy, hope a deference, and educated colored youth a scarcity in the land.<sup>98</sup>

Fortune not only criticized the state of education in the South, but he took particular exception with the lack of education of the freedmen in Jacksonville, stating that many of Jacksonville's youths did not work as hard as they could on their studies. He wrote that, "They had rather work in hotels, so as to be in the city to enjoy transitory pleasures, than 'teach in the country.' Society is naturally at a low grade, especially among the young men. Young men from the North, eminently qualified to teach, easily fall into the delusion chimera; thus making discord doubly harmonious."<sup>99</sup>

In this portion of the letter, it seems as though Fortune issued a condemnation of the state of morals in Jacksonville, by implying that Jacksonville's young African American population lacked the focus or drive to learn; and worse, that black northerners who come to aid in educating the freedmen were themselves corrupted by the poor state of society in the city. Fortune's general concern with the state of education throughout the South demonstrates that he did not believe that northern African Americans were doing all they could for their people.

Other black northerners in Jacksonville also expressed their displeasure over the state of schools in the city. In 1876, Norman Bascom Sterrett wrote a letter to the *Christian Recorder* stating that the schools in Jacksonville are in "good condition, with the exception of what is called the 'Normal High School,' for colored. This school is superintended by a white lady, whose labors might have done in the days of yore. But we do not believe at this day in children being turned out as graduates after they have learned to read, write, and cipher a little, with a

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<sup>98</sup> Fortune, *Christian Recorder*, 24 May 1877.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

faint idea of grammar.” He then went on to suggest that perhaps a “competent gentleman” of the A. M. E. could request to take over the school, “to place themselves where they can elevate their people and crown themselves with glory.”<sup>100</sup>

Indeed, the black preachers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church attempted to establish a school for blacks in the early years of Reconstruction in Florida. As early as 1866, A. M. E. Reverend Charles H. Pearce expressed his desire for establishing a school to train some of Florida’s freedmen to be ministers, and the fundraising began. In 1872, the African Methodist Episcopal Church moved to adopt the school and name it Brown Theological Institute, after John Mifflin Brown, the eleventh A. M. E. church bishop, who had been born in Delaware and educated at Oberlin College in Ohio.<sup>101</sup>

In 1873, A. M. E. Reverend William D. Johnson wrote to the *Christian Recorder* concerning the establishment of Brown Theological Institute in Live Oak, Florida, a distance of about eighty miles from Jacksonville. He spoke highly of the future of the school, writing:

I came to the state full of the idea of an advanced school to assist candidates for the ministry. A class of young men was soon formed. They met at the parsonage in the morning before business hours to recite, among other studies, Rhetoric and the Latin language... We now have the Brown University at Live Oak Fla., which under the able management of the agent, Rev. C. H. Pearce and the cooperation of many of its friends promises soon to take its place among the great educational establishments of the world.<sup>102</sup>

Unfortunately, on September 19, 1873, before the school had been completed, a hurricane ripped through the town of Live Oak and destroyed the building’s timber frame. Historians

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<sup>100</sup> The ‘Normal High School’ of which Sterrett speaks may possibly be Stanton Institute, though it cannot be proven. N. Bascom Sterrett, “Our Florida Letter,” *Christian Recorder*, 27 January 1876.

<sup>101</sup> B. L. Perry, Jr., “Black Colleges and Universities in Florida: Past, Present, and Future,” *Journal of Black Studies* 6, no. 1 (Sep., 1875): 71; Rivers and Brown, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 68; Charles Sumner Long, *History of the A. M. E. Church in Florida* (Philadelphia: A. M. E. Book Concern, Printers, 1939), 22-23.

<sup>102</sup> Wm. D. Johnson, “Four Years in Florida: Facts and Reflections,” *Christian Recorder*, 17 April 1873.

Larry Rivers and Canter Brown have stated that A. M. E. Bishop Thomas M. D. Ward tried to raise more funding to rebuild the school by appealing to Methodist Episcopal Church minister R. O. Sidney, a white man, to take responsibility for fundraising. However, the crisis of the Panic of 1873 had set in and a general lack of interest by the congregations of the A. M. E. churches in Florida led to few donations. Additionally, Sidney had been guaranteed fifteen percent of all of the funds given to rebuild the school, and soon fled with what little money was raised.<sup>103</sup>

Brown Theological Institute (which had become known as Brown University) now was effectively dead. Reverend John R. Scott, Sr., however, felt that the institution could be saved if it was moved to Jacksonville. He wrote a strong appeal to the *Christian Recorder* about the failure of the institution in Live Oak in two separate letters from 1875. In the first letter, he criticized the lack of donations from the congregation of the A. M. E. church, arguing that the school would have had plenty funding if each of the 21,000 members and a friend had donated just one dollar. He stated that all of the A. M. E. districts needed to “get alive” on the subject of education, and that Jacksonville was surely “alive” on educating its freedmen. He ended his letter with the promise that a high school would be established in Jacksonville, even if Brown University was not.<sup>104</sup>

In his second letter, Scott detailed the specific reasons behind why Jacksonville would be a much better host to Brown University than Live Oak. Many northerners came to visit Jacksonville yearly, most with the funds to help support the institution, “if they saw that we were determined to carry out the work in the interest of educating the people.” He claimed that five hundred to a thousand visitors would visit Jacksonville annually, whereas Live Oak may only see

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<sup>103</sup> Rivers and Brown, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 91-92.

<sup>104</sup> John R. Scott, Sr., “The A. M. E. Church and Brown’s University in Florida,” *Christian Recorder*, 4 July 1875.



twenty or fewer. With Jacksonville so closely situated to the rivers, the ocean, and the railroads, it was a logical location for the school. Scott stated that Jacksonville had done more for the establishment of the school in Live Oak than any other Florida district, “[showing] that our citizens here are not selfish in the matter at all, but that they are wide awake on the subject of education, and have contributed and will continue to do so, liberally as long as there is a probability of success.”<sup>105</sup>

In 1876, the A. M. E. church of Florida met for an annual conference, where they agreed to recommit themselves to Brown University and voted, somewhat reluctantly, to move the school to Jacksonville. However, it would not be until 1885 that Brown University’s charter was revised, with the influence of A. M. E. Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne, to be called the Florida Normal, Scientific, Industrial and Divinity High School. The school was plagued by a lack of funding, and criticism that students had to pay to attend the school, when the government had already established two free public schools elsewhere in the state. The problems of funding persisted until 1891, when the charter of the school was again rewritten and named Edward Waters College, which has been successful up to the present day.<sup>106</sup>

The northern African Americans who represented the African Methodist Episcopal Church appear to have done what they could to aid the freedmen in Jacksonville. Through their letters to the *Christian Recorder*, though there are few, it can be seen that Mary Still and the male preachers attempted to impose northern ideas of temperance, industry, and education on the freedmen with whom they came into contact. They seemed most concerned with temperance and education, for it was the combination of the two which could lead to proper citizenship for

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<sup>105</sup> John R. Scott, “From Florida,” *Christian Recorder*, 8 July 1875.

<sup>106</sup> Rivers and Brown, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 108, 150-152, 174.

African Americans. By bringing these elements of “the North” to Jacksonville, black northerners attempted to draw the city’s freedmen into their northern views of modernity and progress. Unfortunately, the limit of source materials makes it difficult to determine how Jacksonville’s black population responded to the efforts of the men and women from the African Methodist Episcopal Church. However, the letters from the northerners demonstrate that they felt responsibility for aiding their people and wanted the best for Jacksonville’s African American population.

## CHAPTER THREE

Following the end of the Civil War, northern white men from the northern Methodist Episcopal Church came to the South to aid the freedmen. Few institutions existed at the time that could provide the opportunity to learn for those African Americans who sought an education. During Reconstruction, the northern Methodist Episcopal Church established schools throughout the South using the Freedmen's Aid Society in order to encourage the freedmen to gain an education. One school in particular, Cookman Institute in Jacksonville, Florida, became the institution of choice for many of the city's African American citizens.

This chapter will examine Cookman Institute, a school established in 1872 by the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, Florida. The administrator of Cookman Institute, Reverend Samuel B. Darnell, had a strong connection with the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, and as will be shown, internalized many of the views the church espoused during Reconstruction. His attitude about race and rights was directly influenced by the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, and he used northern concepts of education, economy, and time in his attempt to address the problems of education in a southern society.

In order to understand the ideas of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, it will be necessary to briefly discuss the schism of 1844, which resulted in a northern sect and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. During the early 1830s, the Methodist Episcopal Church slowly began to divide itself on the national discussion of slavery. Historian Mitchell Snay states that the complex hierarchy of the church made it difficult for northerners and southerners to come together on decisions about slavery. With disagreements over who had the power to

decide that members of the Methodist Episcopal Church could or could not own slaves, the tension mounted within the church as abolitionist sentiment spread in the North.<sup>107</sup>

In 1844, the conflict over slavery came to a head. According to Snay, Bishop James Osgood Andrew of Georgia did not own slaves when he became a minister, but inherited slaves through marriage and owned slaves at the time the General Conference was held in 1844. The General Conference, composed of representatives from congregations across the United States, voted that Osgood should manumit his slaves or be removed from the episcopacy. The dissenting voters were nearly all southern. Snay states that because of this affront to Osgood, the southern members of the Methodist Episcopal Church removed themselves and thus became a separate sect, forming under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.<sup>108</sup>

Mitchell Snay argues that the schism occurred solely over the issue of slavery in the states. The southern members of the Church believed that since the Bible did not address slavery in any way, the Methodist Episcopal Church had no right to declare it illegal, unconstitutional, or inhumane. As Snay writes, southerners were angered by the fact that slavery, which they viewed as a political issue, had been introduced into the church, thus violating concepts of separation of church and state. Northern Methodists, however, spurred on by the spread of abolition and the end of slavery in most northern states, did not agree. Because of this, southern Methodists removed themselves from the main congregation, because they believed that the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church were in jeopardy.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 127-28.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 129-33.

The discussion of the split in the Methodist Episcopal Church is important because it sheds light on concepts of modernity and progressivism in the North during and after the Civil War. Historians Christa Dierkschiede and Peter S. Onuf have studied the sectional division between the North and the South during this time. They argue that each side saw itself as progressive, and the other as “backwards.” Southerners believed they were modern and progressive because slavery had been endowed by God and was the foundation of a civilized society. Northerners saw themselves as modern because they rejected slavery, in the style of the Europeans, and freeing the slaves would secure America’s claim to civility. Many northerners began working to help freed African Americans gain their rights. In this way, northerners felt that in order to maintain the ideals of the Revolution, they had to aid African Americans in their desire to become socially mobile.<sup>110</sup>

Many northerners participated in Reconstruction through the various aid societies that came to the South. Historian Richard B. Drake has analyzed the operation of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church and the Freedmen’s Aid Society. Many of the members were former white abolitionists who, after Emancipation, believed that it was their responsibility to care for the former slaves because whites had freed them. They felt that educating blacks would prepare them for the responsibility of freedom. Following in the spirit of racial egalitarianism, the aid societies operating in the South denounced segregation and attempted to educate both whites and blacks in the same classrooms. However, the outcry from white southerners forbade the intermixing of white and black students. Drake has noted that often the children of white teachers attended school with black students, but very few other white children did. For

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<sup>110</sup> Christa Dierkschiede and Peter S. Onuf, “Slaveholding Nation, Slaveholding Civilization,” in *In the Cause of Liberty: How the Civil War Redefined American Ideals*, eds. William J. Cooper, Jr., and John M. McCardell, Jr., (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 9-13.

example, at Cookman Institute, Samuel Darnell's daughter and son were educated along with black students, but they are the only recorded white students to have attended the school while Darnell was principal.<sup>111</sup>

The northern Methodist Episcopal Church believed it was an institution which could save the South. Years of war, the plight of the "rebels," and the new responsibilities of blacks as freedmen called for the care and attention of the church. Historian Ralph E. Morrow has argued that the Methodists saw the South as a blank slate, a place where they could go forth and spread the word of salvation and God's love for all people, black or white. In 1888, Bishop W. F. Mallalieu shared this sentiment in the *Zion's Herald*:

The work that the Methodist Episcopal Church is doing in the South through its half-dozen societies... is one of unmixed blessing. Wherever we go we carry all good, and boundless blessings result to the people for whom we labor, and for the whole community. Our church is a most important factor in the work of reconstruction on Gospel principles... We propose to flood this land with light and love, and contribute our full share to the philanthropic, patriotic and religious effort necessary to the elevation and salvation of the people.<sup>112</sup>

Morrow argues that the church strived to educate a small group of African Americans who would then continue the uplift of others of their race. In his words, "The African was to be his own regenerator."<sup>113</sup> Many Methodists believed that blacks were capable of being self-sufficient, but only through an education could African Americans gain rights. Methodists founded schools for the freedmen originally because the need for African American teachers and

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<sup>111</sup> Richard B. Drake, "Freedmen's Aid Societies and Sectional Compromise," *The Journal of Southern History* 29, no. 2 (May, 1963), 177-178; Cookman Institute and Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1890): 5, 12.

<sup>112</sup> Bishop W. P. Mallalieu, "Jacksonville, and Going There," *Zion's Herald*, Feb 8, 1888, 42. American Periodical Series Online.

<sup>113</sup> Ralph E. Morrow, "Northern Methodism in the South during Reconstruction," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 41, no. 2 (Sep., 1954): 206.

ministers was desperate. Cookman Institute was established primarily to train African American men to be ministers, who would establish their own congregations and institutions of learning.<sup>114</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, the northern Methodist church faced changing perceptions of blacks by whites. Historian Glenn C. Altschuler has argued that at the end of the Civil War, whites saw blacks as inherently inferior, incapable of changing their low social status. They also viewed them as physically inferior; for example, some “studies” determined that African Americans had smaller heads and therefore smaller brains, which was a sign of lesser intelligence. Altschuler argues that Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution further intensified the inferiority argument. Social Darwinists believed that evolution, “the survival of the fittest,” would eventually eradicate the African American population because they would not be able to outlive whites. The members of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, however, found no *physical* inferiority of blacks to whites. They felt that their social condition prior to emancipation had hindered their educational and social development; thus, they were *culturally* inferior. However, with training, religion, and a proper education, they could be made into self-sufficient, contributing members of society.<sup>115</sup>

The above ideas were reflected by the northern Methodist Episcopal Church as early as 1866, just one year after the end of the Civil War. *The Christian Advocate*, a northern religious newspaper, published an article that argued that northerners had to “recognize [African Americans] coequality with whites.” The author believed that the freedmen were “destined to constitute a very considerable element in our population, and the future of American society, both politically and morally, must largely depend upon their condition.” It was the responsibility

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 198, 205; Foster, Jr., and Foster, “The Last Shall be First,” 277.

<sup>115</sup> Glenn C. Altschuler, *Race, Ethnicity, and Class in American Social Thought, 1865-1919*, American History Series (Arlington Heights, Ill.: H. Davidson, 1982), 2-5.

of all of the churches, but especially the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, to “elevate” the freedmen spiritually and intellectually. This would be accomplished by recognizing the racial and political equality of blacks and whites.<sup>116</sup>

Samuel Darnell, principal of Cookman Institute, followed the ideas that the northern Methodist Episcopal Church espoused. Very few writings of his survive; however, a speech which Darnell gave at a conference for educators in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, in 1883 reflects the church’s views on racial equality and social uplift. In the first part of the speech, Darnell stressed that the “Negro” is a man, created by God and therefore of the same blood as any other man. Influenced by Darwin’s theory of evolution, Darnell stated that “climactic changes, survival of the *best* adapted, the retreat, transformation, or death of the *least* adapted gave rise to the distinctive features of the various races, and by this method of modification, under the tropical sun, came to be the Negro race.” Darnell’s discussion of evolution shows that he believed that the conditions in which blacks had lived made them inferior to whites; however, he still believed that both blacks and whites were of the same blood and born of God, and therefore no *physical* inferiority existed in the black race.<sup>117</sup>

Darnell argued for the responsibility of whites to aid blacks, based upon the principles of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He described the skin pigmentation of African Americans as that “from the fairest blonde to the deepest black.” He asked his audience, in no uncertain terms, whose responsibility was it for the lighter shades of the African Americans’ skin? He implied

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<sup>116</sup> “The Church and the Freedmen,” *Christian Advocate* 41, no. 45 (November 8, 1866): 356. American Periodical Series Online.

<sup>117</sup> S. B. Darnell, “Education an Indispensable Agency in the Redemption of the Negro Race,” in *Christian Educators in Council, Sixty Addresses by American Educators: with Historical Notes upon the National Education Assembly, Held at Ocean Grove, N.J., August 9-12, 1883*, eds. National Education Assembly and Joseph Crane Hartzell (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1884), 62.



that whites *had* inter-mixed the races, and must now take responsibility for it. Darnell stated that “we must stand up statesmanlike, and meet the responsibilities of this *national* question squarely, with Christian fidelity, and provide for the cultivation of this susceptible soul.” To Darnell, the duty of “uplifting” the African American race lay squarely on the shoulders of whites.<sup>118</sup>

Finally, Darnell spoke of the conditions which the freedmen endured under slavery, which had inevitably affected their lower social position under whites. He argued that the integrity of the “Negro” was often called into question, but this referenced their “conscience... [which] was almost obliterated by the devastations through which they passed. Might was right, and every human hope or tie was held in the master’s hand... He [The slave] was a *thing*, not a person, in the eyes of the law... Any people so *overpowered* by the hand of such wanton oppression would have broken down.” Darnell acknowledged that whites did not view their slaves as human beings, and he believed that any people forced to live in such conditions would also lack skills for social improvement. Darnell then turned to the “rebounding natures” of blacks, the men who “can be found in any community upon whose broad shoulders rest the honors and responsibilities requisite for a first-class citizen—we have many such in Florida.” Here, he referenced his students at Cookman Institute, boasting that many of the graduates of the school had become teachers, doctors, and lawyers. Darnell honestly believed that the education of blacks could provide social mobility and greater success in their lives.<sup>119</sup>

Darnell’s views on race were reflected in the operation of Cookman Institute, which began originally as a night school in 1872 to train African American males for the ministry. Of the start of Cookman, Darnell wrote, “This enterprise was inaugurated in an unostentatious way

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 62-63.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 63-64.

in 1872, simply to do good among the needy and neglected masses of the freed people.”<sup>120</sup> The Freedmen’s Aid Society saw that African American population of Jacksonville needed teachers, and Cookman offered courses in this area in its earliest years. The school’s mission was to “provide a great want of many of the colored people, whose future depends largely upon our efforts.”<sup>121</sup> The “great want,” according to the Methodists, was an education, which they felt could help make African Americans socially mobile and improve their lives.

The location of Cookman Institute in Jacksonville influenced how Darnell sought education for blacks, and he attempted to gain donations from the church and from private benefactors. Each year, approximately ninety percent of the students who attended Cookman came from Jacksonville or smaller cities in the north Florida area. Very few students attended from out of state, but some students came from as far away as Georgia, South Carolina, Ohio, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Texas.<sup>122</sup> In the school’s catalog, Darnell wrote:

Jacksonville is the centre of commerce, business enterprise and educational interests for the State of Florida... In and around this centre the people of color are gathered in large numbers, and here it is wisely located, where its influence may be most felt in reaching the great desideratum in the elevation of the financial, social and moral condition of this great and growing people... The needs of the Institute could nowhere be so easily met in our State as here. Nor could those raised on the borders of civilization be more easily and rapidly developed than by coming into contact with such influences as are found here.<sup>123</sup>

Darnell saw that the need was greatest in Jacksonville for aiding the African American population. He relied on the teachings of the northern Methodist church to uplift “those raised

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<sup>120</sup> Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1886), 22.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>122</sup> For example, the 1885-1886 catalog lists 236 students total. Of these, 21 students came from out of state; thus, approximately ninety percent of the students came from Jacksonville and other parts of Florida. Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1886), 3-9.

<sup>123</sup> Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1888), 15.

on the borders of civilization” and provide them with an education.<sup>124</sup> The students who attended Cookman Institute would have been considered poor by the standards of the 1870s and the 1880s. Their mothers, fathers, and grandparents with whom they lived held occupations such as farmers, carpenters, general laborers, but few held city positions.<sup>125</sup> The need then became greater because of their low economic statuses. Despite the inability of the students to contribute financially to the institution, Darnell was willing and eager to find and educate African American students.

The principles of “uplifting the Negro” in which Darnell and other Methodist ministers believed formed the basis of the education offered to the students. In 1868, a northern Methodist bishop named Clark delivered an address on behalf of the Freedmen’s Aid Society which discussed the importance of education for African Americans. Clark believed that, “Without education, the boon of freedom will be a curse and not a blessing. Nay, it will be impossible for him to maintain his position as a freeman without an education.” Clark states that whites would take advantage of African Americans who were unable to read or write. He also believed that though southerners may make a provision for education for African Americans in the future,

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> In order to ascertain the socio-economic status of the students, I randomly chose the 1886-1887 Cookman Institute catalog, which provided the names of the students and the locations in which they lived. Beginning with the first class of students, I counted every ten names to the end of the list of 226 total students. I ended up with 10 males and 12 females. With their names and locations, I went to the 1880 census and attempted to find their parents. Of the 10 males, I was unable to locate two of the students, and of the 12 females, I was unable to locate 2 of the students. One student was living in an orphanage, and one student’s father’s occupation was not given. Of the 16 remaining students randomly sampled, I ended with 7 farmers, 3 laborers, 2 carpenters, a city marshal, an owner of a livery stable, a steward, and a river boat pilot. Source: Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, *1880 United States Federal Census* [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2005; Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute*, Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1887: 3-9.

“years could elapse” before the system operated successfully. Northerners had to take responsibility for the African Americans while a southern educational system was put in place.<sup>126</sup>

One passage in particular reflects how Clark and his fellow Methodists were influenced by northern culture. Bishop Clark wrote:

This education is essential, also, to give them the proper type of religion; to preserve them from superstitions of witchcraft and of demons; and to prevent them from degenerating into wild fanaticism. By this alone will they be taught to sustain proper domestic relations; to take care of and educate their children, so that they may be saved by the blighting effects entailed upon the race by the system of slavery. They must have it that they may learn to economize their time and means, and to secure their rights against designing and dishonest men. It will be impossible to build them up and blend them into the social and political fabric without the culture of education.<sup>127</sup>

The excerpt demonstrates the northern influence in the Methodist Episcopal Church’s outline for black education. First and foremost, many northerners sought to reform African American religion, which they viewed as uncivilized. As Joe M. Richardson has noted with the American Missionary Association, another northern aid society working in the South during Reconstruction, the loud religious exercises of the freedmen upset the instructors. Teachers in Jacksonville, Florida, for instance, preached passages out of the Bible which spoke of sitting calmly as sermons were given. Richardson believes that the A. M. A. women working in Florida “exhibited a remarkable lack of knowledge and understanding of the black man’s religious history.” It can be argued that northern Methodist ministers took offense to the loud, excited religious services of the freedmen.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> “M. E. Freedmen’s Aid Society; Bishop Clark’s Address; Bishop Kingsley’s Address by Rev. F. S. De Hass,” *Christian Advocate* 43, no. 1 (Jan, 1868): 2.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Joe M. Richardson, “Christian Abolitionism: The American Missionary Association and the Florida Negro,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 40, no. 1 (Winter, 1971): 44-45.

The excerpt also shows how northern industrialization and urbanization had influenced concepts of time and money. Historian E. P. Thompson has argued that with industrialization, people gained new concepts of time and work driven by many factors—such as labor and money incentives—which were implemented in the day-to-day operation of society. Bishop Clark’s statement demonstrates that as a northerner, he was keenly aware of the importance of making the most of time and money, and that he believed the northern Methodist Episcopal Church should teach the freedmen about the basics of economy.<sup>129</sup>

Indeed, Samuel Darnell’s operation of Cookman Institute reflected Bishop Clark’s outline for African American education, which, in many ways, was paternalistic. Of the pupils, Darnell wrote that “their welfare has been the constant solicitude of those under whom they have been placed.” Regarding money, Darnell suggested that parents who provided cash for their children’s use turn it over to him or the Matron for safe-keeping, for “pupils often learn habits of wasting money when it is at their disposal, that injure them after the loss and distraction from their studies have occurred.” He urged parents to board their children at Cookman, because he stated that he could not be held responsible for the behavior of those pupils who boarded off-campus and away from his direct supervision. Students could board in the dormitories for \$1.75 a week, which was, according to Darnell, a much cheaper rate than “board in the city.”<sup>130</sup>

The students had to follow strict rules governing their behavior. Darnell expected “implicit obedience” from all of his pupils. Teachers were to be shown the utmost respect, and their directions had to be carried out immediately. Students had to attend daily exercises in the church, arrive on time for meals and classes, and none could miss their daily courses except in

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<sup>129</sup> Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” *Past and Present* 38, no. 1 (1967): 90.

<sup>130</sup> Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1888), 16-18.

the case of sickness. Parents and friends were not allowed to contact students at the school, unless Darnell knew about it first. Finally, boarders at the school were not permitted to leave the grounds without special permission, and never during times of their classes or recitations. Female students had tighter restrictions on their trips off-campus, for they were only allowed to leave the campus between 2:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. Darnell threatened penalties if these rules were broken. In this way, Darnell enforced punctuality and mandatory attendance with his students.<sup>131</sup>

The exact year that Cookman Institute became co-educational is unknown. By the year 1876, both males and females were listed on the enrollment rosters, but it is most likely that they were educated separately. The catalogs do not make this distinction, but other clues show that male and female students were not taught in the same classroom. For example, the students were boarded in separate buildings on campus. In nearly every annual catalog, Darnell references the growing population of students, and the increased housing needed in particular for the female students. He appeals to benefactors to donate money for land and buildings, for “there is no cause of more humane or national importance than the education of the freedmen.”<sup>132</sup> His frequent pleas for donations for housing can be linked to his recommendation to parents that he could not be held responsible for the actions of students not boarded on campus.<sup>133</sup>

In addition to boarding the students in separate buildings, Darnell limited the interaction between male and female students to meal time. Regarding the male-female student relationship, Darnell wrote, “The association of the sexes, while they are carefully guarded, has led to the most home-like and desirable conditions. Much culture and refinement have resulted from

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>132</sup> Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1886), 23.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 23.

proper intercourse at the table and in recitations.”<sup>134</sup> In this way, Darnell and the other teachers attempted to prepare the students for the male-female relationship outside of school. By preventing the students from establishing improper relationships, Darnell reflects Bishop Clark’s assessment that African Americans should be taught proper “domestic relationships.”<sup>135</sup>

The catalogs reflect gender relations from the late nineteenth century in other ways. While all students studied academics, music classes and Biblical classes were also offered to a select number of students. Because the catalogs list the students enrolled in specialized programs, it is possible to determine the male-to-female ratios for these courses. From the catalogs, it is clear that mostly men enrolled in the Biblical classes, while women took music lessons. Between 1880 and 1881, for example, only males are listed in the Biblical class roster. In the 1882 catalog, however, three women are listed among the fifteen other male students. While some women were allowed to study Biblical classes, the proportion of males to females is much greater, reflecting common ideas that only males could lead the church. The ratio was reversed for music classes—the 1881 catalog lists 21 students enrolled, of which only two were males.<sup>136</sup>

The discussion of how Darnell perceived gender relationships is important because it shows that Darnell was not *truly* egalitarian toward his treatment of his students. If Darnell advocated egalitarianism, male and female students would have had the same rules and would have been educated in the same classrooms. Judging by the catalogs, Darnell did not advocate

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>135</sup> “Bishop Clark’s Address,” 2.

<sup>136</sup> Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: Horace Drew’s Book and Job Office, 1882), 8-9; Cookman Institute and Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: Horace Drew’s Book and Job Office, 1881), 9.

any of the above conditions. However, Darnell was not unique in his division of students along gender lines—it was common practice also in northern white schools for males and females to be educated separately. Historian Lynn D. Gordon argues that separating men and women in the classroom was due to efforts to educate women for teaching careers, while men studied for professional careers to earn wages for the home. Gordon links the advent of women’s education to northern industrialization. She states that in the mid-nineteenth century, as labor became more common in factories and shops instead of the home, children (male and female) had to earn wages before marriage. Teaching, for women, was a respectable way to earn a living, but would not impose on the male public sphere. Also, most women who remained single could teach without fear of much ridicule by the public.<sup>137</sup>

Because Darnell educated his male and female students in separate classrooms, it can be argued that Darnell advocated *racial* egalitarianism, seeing the potential for blacks to be equal to whites socially and politically. He demonstrated this through a wide variety of academic coursework that he offered his students at Cookman Institute. The academic courses offered revolved around a base program of studying the classics, such as Latin and ancient Greek language and writings. In 1876, the year which the earliest catalog is available, in addition to algebra, math, English grammar, and other courses, students were required to study Caesar’s *Commentaries*, Sallust’s *Orations*, Cicero’s *Orations*, Greek grammar and language, and Latin grammar.<sup>138</sup> The most advanced students took these courses. This curriculum was largely unchanged until 1881, when Darnell introduced additional studies in Latin and Greek, such as

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<sup>137</sup> Lynn D. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 13-16.

<sup>138</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: The Semi-Tropical Press, 1877), 10-11.



Virgil's *Aeneid*, the *Fables of Aesop* (commonly known as *Aesop's Fables*), as well as Latin composition. Students were also required to perform declamations in the above courses.<sup>139</sup>

The importance that Darnell placed on a Latin and Greek curriculum as the foundation of the education of the students leads one to ask, what would be the purpose of such coursework? Why would the Methodist Episcopal Church base the entire curriculum on these studies? Historian Caroline Winterer has studied classical education in the nineteenth century, and she has provided many reasons for a classical focus in schools of higher learning. Winterer has argued that first and foremost, America's infatuation with Roman and Greek culture in the late nineteenth century was reflected in a change in coursework. During this period, as America experienced rapid technological changes, becoming modern and industrialized, institutions of learning focused on studying the classics as a way to reject modernity and return oneself to the reputation of the stately and noble citizens of the Romans and Greeks. By studying the writings and history of these ancient civilizations, students could be molded into virtuous and selfless members of society. While this applied to all students, black or white, there is an additional reason why blacks in particular were offered a classical education.<sup>140</sup>

To this end, Winterer has argued that northern missionary societies who established schools in the South, such as the Freedmen's Aid Society, created a curriculum around a classical education because they believed that a classical studies program was the foundation of an "elite education," which would prepare black students for "racial equality" in their political

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<sup>139</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1882), 10.

<sup>140</sup> Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 4.

and social lives.<sup>141</sup> This reflects the principles of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in that through a policy of racial egalitarianism, the education they offered black students would provide the opportunity for social mobility and equality with whites. Regarding the Latin language, Darnell saw translating Latin to English and back as a “mental drill” that would sharpen the mind and strengthen reading abilities. Teaching the students Latin would allow them to “become easy and graceful speakers of our beautiful English.” Darnell, in choosing to teach his students Latin and Greek language, literature and history, advocated racial equality at Cookman.<sup>142</sup>

The remaining coursework offered at Cookman also provides insight into how the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in particular, Darnell, believed that an education for African Americans would undo the damage that slavery had caused. In the mid-1880s, Darnell, as author of the catalogs, started to describe the usefulness of the courses in the curriculum to the students. An examination of the coursework will serve three purposes: to show how Darnell conceived of conditions under slavery, how he felt that he could correct the behavior learned, and how race relations can be interpreted from the conclusions Darnell drew in the catalogs.<sup>143</sup>

In the “Departments of Studies” section of the catalogs, Darnell details the guidelines for coursework. He states that students must have a “thorough course of English, and until the pupil gets well-versed in grammar, geography, &c., he ought not to turn his attention to anything else.” The courses in geography were meant to “make the pupils acquainted with the varied world in which we live.” Darnell assumed that the African American students had no knowledge of the

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>142</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1886), 20. The discussion of the academic curriculum will come from the 1885-1886 Cookman Institute catalog. The catalogs from 1885 to 1893 generally contain the same course descriptions, but for the sake of consistency, I have chosen to cite from one catalog.

world, countries, or land features, and therefore prepared them for an understanding of how the world worked as a geographic entity. He included in this course an understanding of Earth's climate and how it affects human life.<sup>144</sup>

A great importance was placed on mathematics. The students were taught arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. Darnell believed that with mathematics, the use of which requires students to commit numbers and formulas to memory, one's mental sharpness could be developed and enhanced. He wrote of teaching the African American students mathematics, "We find the effects of the old system under which this race was reared tended to restrain and subvert this faculty of the mind. But the results, slow in coming to large development, do prove the possibility of a generous return for all efforts in this direction." The arithmetic, he stated, was "very difficult... the newest and best we could find," and the students were learning it with "commendable speed." The "old system"—slavery—had made African Americans culturally inferior, but even though the results were "slow in coming," Darnell saw potential for African Americans to develop socially and academically.<sup>145</sup>

Cookman Institute also offered history courses to its students, to teach them "the facts of our own nation and the people of other lands." Darnell also strived to teach the students about the rise and fall of ancient civilizations, perhaps, as historian Caroline Winterer has alluded, to warn the students of the threat of corruption in American society. Reading was an essential component of the curriculum as well. Darnell wrote in the catalogs that the highest attention was paid to elocution (speaking in proper grammar and tone). Darnell even employed "vocal charts" to assist the students in proper oration. Darnell wrote that "the evidences of the growth of

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 19.

culture among the students give a large return for the labor bestowed.” Darnell believed that the African American students were becoming more cultured in their studies at Cookman Institute.<sup>146</sup>

Philosophy and physiology, Darnell wrote, “are very necessary to the enlarged duties and growing conditions of our pupils.” Darnell believed that these subjects would help shape how the African American students approached their new responsibilities as free individuals. Philosophy would develop the mind and “suggest new lines of thought” which may lead the student to new academic pursuits. Physiology was taught for the same reason, in order to inspire students to undertake lessons in medicine, to “answer the crying need of the thousands who perish annually for want of such knowledge and medical attendance.” These two subjects, Darnell believed, might change the academic pursuits of the students.<sup>147</sup>

Darnell placed the greatest importance on English grammar. Darnell believed that the English dialect developed by African Americans during slavery hindered the students enrolled at Cookman and prevented them from moving upward in society. Therefore, he wrote of studies in English:

Pupils have no harder task than to unlearn their former words and sentences, and form a new language. A poor, mother tongue—and scanty vocabulary, a common fate of our people—are serious hindrances to intellectual life, but they can be overcome, and language lessons, sentence making and close analysis of authors will, *do* correct many evils and endow the minds of our more advanced students with correct and polished vehicles to convey their thoughts.<sup>148</sup>

To Darnell, proper English was essential for African Americans to better their lives. The statement above shows that Darnell was concerned with not how blacks interacted with other

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 20.

blacks and the language used, but how blacks would communicate with whites. He prepared them for social interaction with whites by correcting poor grammar and pronunciation. The interaction could come in many forms, whether through employment, religious meetings, or political events. In any event, Darnell wanted to prepare his African American students with the best tools possible to impress whites. One cannot assume that every African American student who attended Cookman had poor speaking habits, or, for that matter, that every white spoke proper English. However, Darnell believed it was a matter which needed his utmost attention.

Another element of the curriculum deserves attention because it has formed the basis of historians' arguments that Cookman Institute was an industrial school, meant to give students vocational training, and not academic training. It has been shown that Darnell focused largely on an academic, liberal arts education for his students. However, in the 1887 catalog, Darnell wrote that three years prior (approximately 1884), young women began to receive training in domestic skills, such as sewing. To Darnell, the training would be "necessary to the welfare of the true woman in the household." Darnell believed that women needed to be prepared to run a household, and that the training would engender their success.<sup>149</sup>

A change can be seen in the catalog of 1888, only one year after Darnell first referenced a domestic science class for the women. In this catalog, Darnell introduces the creation of two departments, a "Practical Industries" department for the men, and a "Domestic Sciences" department for the women—again, dividing them along gender lines. Darnell wrote that eighteen men had taken part in carpentry classes offered at Jacksonville's Duval Graded High School on the benefit of the John F. Slater Fund. The John F. Slater Fund was started in 1882 by

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<sup>149</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., 1887), 21.

John Fox Slater, a northern philanthropist who contributed money to the Christian education of blacks in the South. Historian John E. Fisher has argued that Atticus Haygood, a member of the Board of Trustees for the Slater Fund, wanted to use the money for industrial education for blacks. He saw an industrial education as “practicable” for blacks attending college.<sup>150</sup> The money was distributed to schools across the South, including Cookman Institute. Indeed, Cookman Institute is referenced in annual reports of the Slater Fund. In the annual report of 1889, thirty-three students from Cookman Institute attended Duval High School for classes in carpentry.<sup>151</sup>

The entry in the catalog for 1889 is particularly telling of how Darnell perceived adding industrial training to his curriculum. He stated that more classes for both women and men would be formed in order to devote more time to “this essential qualification for skilled labor...by the munificence at the hands of Rev. Atticus G. Haygood.”<sup>152</sup> Clearly, Haygood made an impression on Darnell, striking enough for Darnell to add this training to his program. Of course, Darnell received money from the Slater Fund, which he desperately needed to keep Cookman Institute operating.

From 1891 to 1893, Darnell continued to offer some industrial courses for his male and female students in addition to their regular studies. However, Darnell placed the importance on academic, and not industrial, training. This is shown in a variety of ways. Regarding the women, Darnell wrote that they received training in sewing and cooking, but “we do not allow

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<sup>150</sup> John E. Fisher, *The John F. Slater Fund: A Nineteenth Century Affirmative Action for Negro Education* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1986), 51.

<sup>151</sup> *Proceedings of the Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund for the Education of Freedmen* (Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1889), 26; Fisher, *The John F. Slater Fund*, 1-3.

<sup>152</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., Stationers and Printers, 1889), 25.

these studies to interfere with the regular studies, but require the female boarders to practice them once a week.”<sup>153</sup> Darnell refused to allow any of the manual training courses to interfere with their academic lessons.<sup>154</sup>

Of the men, Darnell wrote that it was their responsibility *as* men to learn carpentry in order to provide shelter for their families, and that the “rude homes must give way to comfortable and imposing buildings where our families are to be reared.”<sup>155</sup> With the carpentry training, Darnell stressed the new social position of African American males as heads of households, who had to provide for their families physically, by providing shelter, and monetarily, by giving them the skills for a professional career. In this way, it seems that Darnell continued to stress that academics remained the key to the success of his African American pupils, and did not allow the industrial training, no matter how much funding he received from the Slater Fund, to interfere with it. The industrial courses appear to have been extracurricular activities meant to supplement the academic education, and not substitute for it.

By 1893, Samuel Darnell’s health was failing, and he was forced to retire to his home state of New Jersey, taking his wife and children with him. However, Darnell’s time at Cookman Institute did much to help the freedmen and their children earn an education for professional careers. Darnell’s ideas of “the North” are seen most vividly in his attitudes about race and education. He held many of the same beliefs of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, such as that African Americans were inferior to whites, but with training and an education based on northern curricula, they could become contributing members of society.

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<sup>153</sup> Cookman Institute and the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Catalogue of Cookman Institute* (Jacksonville, Fla.: H. Drew & Bro., Stationers and Printers, 1891), 29.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

Darnell clearly saw differences in northern and southern society and culture, and confronted them by using northern concepts of economy, time, and the “proper” domestic relationship.

Darnell believed that his outline for education for African Americans would prepare them their roles as heads of households and citizens of the United States.



## CONCLUSION

This study is not a comprehensive analysis of the impact of northern white and black Methodists in Florida during Reconstruction. Nor is it a complete analysis of northerners in general in Florida. Many more northern Methodists, as well as enterprising northern industrialists and politicians, inhabited cities in addition to Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, such as Tallahassee and St. Augustine, which were not examined due to the practical limits of this study. Instead, this thesis aims to highlight the ways in which a select group of northerners—white and black male and female Methodists—interpreted southern society through a northern lens, and how they reacted to the differences they saw in southern society as compared to northern society. It is an examination of northern middle class values in southern society. The work that the missionaries performed in these locations speaks to the larger initiative of Reconstruction, which was to unify the country and bring the South back into the North.

Additionally, the northern missionaries who were present in north Florida during Reconstruction viewed themselves as “better,” “more civilized,” or “more advanced” than the southerners with whom they came into contact. It is true that many northerners disapproved of the religious behaviors of many of the freedmen and commented upon the lack of education for both freedmen and poor whites; however, for the historian, this becomes more of a commentary on “modernity” than a discussion of what characteristics determine “civility.” Northerners believed they were modern because of their views on education, industry, labor, temperance, and race. Southerners, on the other hand, had established their own system of economy and racial attitudes that clashed with northern beliefs. It could be suggested that the convergence of these

two cultures during Reconstruction in north Florida resulted in the beginning of change to southern society in areas like Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello.

Chapter One analyzed some of the northern white women from the American Missionary Association, who began work in Jacksonville, Florida, around 1865, but soon moved to other cities such as Gainesville and Monticello. In their letters to the American Missionary Association, the women used northern middle class concepts of race, wage labor, punctuality, and temperance to address the perceived differences they saw in southern society. The women generally encountered resistance from the poor whites, but had greater success in drawing the freedmen to the schools and churches they established in Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello. The women seemed appalled by the living situations of the freedmen, and they disapproved of the debt system by which the freedmen were employed. They also tried to institute attendance and punctuality with their students, and believed that establishing temperance societies would make the freedmen better Christians. By bringing elements of the North to Florida, the women of the American Missionary Association attempted to lay the foundation for change in a southern society.

Chapter Two examined some of the African American men and women from the African Methodist Episcopal Church, who came to Jacksonville in 1865 and remained throughout Reconstruction. These men and women sought to teach the freedmen about the values of citizenship, with the hope that in the future, all African Americans would have political and civil rights equal to that of whites. They sought to encourage northern African Americans to come to Florida to encourage the “uplift” of their race, by agitating for the right to vote, which was directly tied to citizenship in the North. The northern blacks also brought temperance to the

freedmen because it was seen as a middle class value that could help them break the stereotypes that whites had placed on them. Additionally, northern blacks commented on the freedmen's working habits and encouraged them to work for pay. They observed that Jacksonville's industry and economy was growing with the influx of tourists and other northerners. Finally, northern blacks deemed education the most important skill for the freedmen, because without an education, it would be nearly impossible for them to gain rights for themselves. In this way, northern blacks used elements of "the North" to try to advance the positions of the freedmen as citizens of the United States.

Finally, Chapter Three examined the work of Samuel Darnell, a northern white Methodist minister who established Cookman Institute in 1872 in order to educate the freedmen of Jacksonville, Florida. The goal of the northern Methodist Church in educating the freedmen was to train African American men for the ministry, and to prepare women for work as teachers. An examination of Darnell's racial attitude reveals a northern influence, in that he followed what the northern Methodist Episcopal Church espoused—that blacks and whites were racially equal, but blacks were culturally inferior to whites due to the conditions under which they had existed during slavery. Darnell believed that with an education, the African American students under his tutelage could be contributing members of society. He brought northern concepts of economy, time, domesticity, and education to the students in his care, and by all intents and purposes attempted to give them a northern education in a southern society.

The three groups present in north Florida during Reconstruction ultimately had varied goals in their interactions with the freedmen and poor whites. The white Methodist women appear to have wanted to train the freedmen and poor whites to be upstanding Christians, who

could be independent and self-sufficient. The northern African American men and women wanted to prepare Florida's freedmen to be citizens of the United States. The northern white Methodists sought to teach southern African American men to be ministers, and the women to be teachers, who could continue the uplift of their own race. Their differing goals shed light on what each group strived to accomplish in their missionary work in north Florida.

Though many historians have studied the impact of northerners in the South, few have attempted to analyze how the northerners may have been influenced by their northern environments in their interaction with the freedmen and poor whites. In this study, I hope to have shown that the white and black men and women from the North who came to Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Monticello, Florida confronted the differences in southern society by using elements of "the North" to solve those problems. This thesis makes a valuable contribution to the historiography of Reconstruction by examining not how northerners reacted to the issues of northern society—those of the growing, industrialized middle class—but how they used those northern middle class values to confront the differences they saw in southern society.

Ultimately, the thesis sheds light on northern culture in southern society during Reconstruction.

Future studies could bring to light how this occurred in other parts of Florida, including Tallahassee and St. Augustine, which also held a large presence of northerners during Reconstruction. Additionally, more analysis is needed to determine how the southern freedmen and poor whites responded to the ideas of education, middle class, and religion that the northerners brought with them to Florida. A clearer understanding of how these northerners may have worked to slowly draw the southerners back into the Union would add greatly to the history of Reconstruction.

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