

THE JUBILEE SINGERS AND THE FREEDMEN'S CAUSE.

Several weeks ago we published a very interesting letter from Rev. Dr. Goodrich, of Cleveland, describing some colored singers from Tennessee, who had been thrilling the people of the Garden City with their strange minstrelsy. These singers are now in New York, and have already given several exhibitions of their wonderful melodies. The ludicrous ideas often associated with "negro minstrelsy" might create a prejudice against the performers of these jubilee singers. But such a prejudice would do them a gross injustice. We cannot speak of the impression made by them elsewhere, but for ourselves, we can say that in listening to them we enjoyed not merely the satisfaction of seeing the marked effects of *education* upon the very humble class to which they belong, but a high degree of artistic pleasure. Some of their songs certainly are amusing enough, but many, indeed the most of them, are of a religious character. They are those religious melodies which have become favorites among the colored people of the South, and which in spite of their frequent repetitions and artless simplicity, appeal to Christian sympathy, and sometimes bring tears to the eyes. The entertainment afforded by these Jubilee Singers, is certainly sufficient to warrant the project of employing them temporarily in bringing before the community the claims of Fisk University, to which they belong, and to the successful training of which their appearance bears such satisfactory testimony.

Indeed, their very presence among us, attracting crowded houses and affording really a high pleasure even to musical amateurs, is an eloquent appeal in behalf of their race. They show what can be accomplished by such education as they, in common with hundreds of others, have enjoyed, but for which hundreds of thousands are waiting still. They indicate plainly the hopefulness of that field of Christian effort, into which we are called alike by patriotism and religion.

We wish them abundant success in their present enterprise. Fisk University is a Methodist institution, but the ecclesiastical supervision under which the work of Christian education is conducted among the colored people of the South, is a matter of minor importance, provided only that it is faithfully done. But it is not well that, as Presbyterians, we should be wanting in those efforts which the freedmen of the country may justly claim at our hands. The field is broad enough for the full employment of all the spare energies of the different Christian bodies of the land. If Archbishop Manning can think the prospect so hopeful as to undertake, in a solemn and formal manner, an English Roman Catholic mission to the freedmen of this country, we may be assured that Presbyterians are neglecting a field which has attracted his attention even from across the Atlantic. If there is a lack of interest in this matter among us, it is more from lack of information than anything else. The experiment has never yet been fully tried in this country of seeing what Christian education can do for the colored race. Their own eagerness for knowledge, now that their bondage has ceased, imposes upon us a duty from which we must not shrink. Our own Church stands committed to a task in which it will have, and ought to have, zealous competitors, and it is certainly not to our credit that we should, by a guilty disregard of obligations imposed by Providence, fall in their rear.