

“So far as can be gathered, the first systematic efforts made in this city, for the education of the people of color, was commenced about the year 1805. A school was then established for their benefit under the patronage of the faculty of Union College, more especially of the President. For a season, it was well attended and promised much, but for reasons unknown to us, was discontinued, after the lapse of two years.

“Then followed a season of utter destitution of the means of education. In vain did our parents plead for the admission of their children, to privileges of other schools. They wept and besought – but their tears and entreaties were unavailing.

“The next effort on our behalf, was put forth by the followers of Wesley. In all the sincerity and godly simplicity of the gospel, our Methodist friends not only contemplated our moral destitution, but were actuated by a noble zeal, to alleviate our sorrows and to enlighten the ignorant, by visiting from house to house. More than this, they threw open the doors of schools established for the benefit of their own children, taught successfully by good Mr. Whiting, Bliss, and a worthy lady by the name of Sally Eldridge, with whose names are associated many pleasing reflections, and who are now, doubtless, enjoying their eternal rest. They did not lacerate our young and tender minds, by those cruel and unreasonable proscriptions which, alas! too often repress the ardor of the colored youth, and drive him with disgust from the halls of learning.

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avail themselves of the only alternative – that of private instructions. Not unfrequently, did they gather together their little ones of the dawn of day, to prepare them for recitations. *Thus were we taught.* Under these disabilities did we learn our first lessons.

“But hitherto hath the Lord helped. He hath done great things, whereof we are glad. Upon this auspicious day – on this heart gladdening occasion – before this newly erected altar will we erect our Ebenezer, and upon it gratefully inscribe,

HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED.”

