

## THE MISSIONARIES.

*Mr. Slade*,—As an act of justice, to his Excellency Governor Gilmer, I beg that you will publish his letter herewith sent, it being an answer to one, which I had the honor to address him, on the 28th ultimo.

With the *political strife* of the country, I have nothing to do, nor did I for one moment contemplate the *elevation* or *depression*, of any candidate for office, when I solicited the publication of my communication in your paper of the 2d instant.

My *entire object* was to secure the character of my church from the censure which was likely to fall upon her, from a misapprehension of her policy, with regard to the appointment of her ministers—and to show my fellow countrymen, that I had inherited from my Father, a sense of my rights and privileges, as a freeborn citizen of the United States.

I strongly conceived, that the notice which Col. Sanford had taken of the Rev. Mr. Trott, in pronouncing that "*he had been discountenanced by his own Conference*"—and yet found at the time of his *arrest*, an accredited minister, under the supervision of the very *authority* by whom it is said he was *degraded*, was to me such an anomaly, in the history of Methodism, that in my humble view, it called for a speedy explanation.

I wished it distinctly understood, that if the Tennessee Conference had sent Mr. Trott to his circuit, as an accredited Missionary, knowing he was guilty of "*officious and overzealous interference in Indian politics*," and in the habit of preaching political sermons, that they had acted altogether without usage, and in direct opposition to the accustomed practice, of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The public has doubtless perceived by my letter already before them, that I never intended to advocate opposition in any form to the properly constituted authorities of the land, *but entirely to the reverse*—with the Chart of Methodism before me, I am constrained to witness, that *obedience to the powers that be*, is an *essential* too prominently laid down, to be overlooked by any of her patriot sons, and especially by men so sacredly related to society, as those, who minister at her *Altars*.

Col. Sanford I am sure will excuse me, for the use of his name, when his own sense of propriety, shall have scanned the motive which urged it upon me—to him I have intended no disrespect, and if I have been so unfortunate, as so to impress him; I am conscious my present declaration will rectify the error.

For the officers commanding the Georgia Guard, at the time of the Rev. Mr. McLeod's arrest, I still entertain the feelings of unbated reprehension, provided they have been truly represented, and if they have been slandered, I hope they will spare neither *time* nor *pains* in holding up their persecutors to merited indignation.

With Governor Gilmer's explanation contained in the letter herewith presented to the public, I am *fully satisfied*, and for myself I have no hesitation in believing that he is still entitled to the highest confidence of his fellow citizens.

With high respect I am, dear sir, your obedient friend,

JOHN HOWARD.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
Milledgeville, 1st Sept. 1831.

REV. SIR,—I have just received your letter of the 29th ult. in which you call my attention to the publication in "the Advocate and Journal" of the 12th, upon the subject of the conduct of the Georgia Guard. I thank you for the direct course which you have pursued in this matter, and the freedom with which you have expressed your feelings and opinions. I have no desire to avoid any scrutiny whatever, into my official conduct.—Mr. McLeod's statement concerning the orders which I have given the guard is wholly destitute of truth. Immediately after the passage of the law which made it criminal for white men to reside among the Cherokees without license after the first of March, I caused one hundred copies to be published and distributed among those upon whom it was to operate. By this means, every white man who resided among the Indians was informed of the provisions of the law in time to make up a deliberate resolve, whether he would obey it or not. Between two and three hundred persons have continued their residence, by taking the oath to support the laws, and obtaining licenses. A few have left the state. The Missionaries alone have publicly denied the power of the state to extend its jurisdiction over them, and expressed their design to disregard the law and abide its penalties. One of them was arrested and discharged by the Superior Court, upon the ground that Missionaries were agents of the United States Government, and therefore not liable to arrest. This person was a Mr. Thompson, who knew at the time that he was not an agent of Government, as he has since acknowledged in a letter to me.—The decision however furnished an excuse for the Missionaries to continue their illegal residence. I procured from the United States government proof that the missionaries as such, were not agents of the government. Instead of ordering Col. Sanford to arrest them immediately, as would have been lawful, and as I think justified by their conduct, I wrote to every missionary notifying them that they would be arrested if they did not remove from the State. Orders were given to Col. Sanford that if they shewed no disposition to oppose the policy of the government, to treat them with kindness and liberality, and permit them to remove as might be most convenient and agreeable to themselves. I received an answer from Worcester and Butler denying the authority of the laws of the State and refusing to obey them. Copies of their answers were sent to Col. Sanford with directions to spare no exertions to arrest them that they might feel the full weight of the law, since such was their choice. There has been no expression or intimation whatever, in any order, or letter, or otherwise from me, to treat those who might be arrested in any other manner than as the law directed. You cannot regret so much as I do that any members of the guard should have been so much excited by the improper conduct of these men, as to put them in chains. That they were in the constant habit of speaking in the most opprobrious terms of our Government, laws and public authorities, I have positive proof. And the account of Mr. McLeod himself, shows how far he was disposed thus to act. Although I cannot excuse the severity with which he was treated, it is certain that the guard acted under excited feelings created by the abuse of those under whose orders they were acting.

But you my dear Sir, and many others, are entirely mistaken, both as to my power over the guard, and the kind of authority which has been conferred upon the guard and the manner of its organization. It is composed of citizens of the state (forty in number) who have been employed upon wages to perform a particular duty. They are but assistants to the civil officers, and are substituted for sheriffs and constables, only because they can act more efficiently. They are neither soldiers nor subject to military law. If they violate the rights of any person whether Missionaries or Indians, they are liable to be sued or indicted like other citizens. I have no authority to punish them, whatever may be their conduct: my power extends only to the appointment of the agent or commissioner (as the commander is called in law) and to organize the guard. That agent himself, cannot punish a member of the guard for disorderly conduct or other offence, not even by dismissing him without pay. However improperly the guard may have acted, Col. Sanford is not answerable for it. Worcester and Trott, and others were arrested whilst he was in Milledgeville, in the discharge of his duty, making his quarterly report. He did not return until after the persons arrested had been confined for several days at his station, waiting for the evidence which he had in his possession to prove that the Missionaries were not agents of the government.

I must refer you to the publications in the Georgia Journal of this day for further evidence of what has been my official conduct. In conclusion I would observe that the Missionaries have not been compelled to desert their religious labors by any conduct of the authorities of the government; but by their improper connection with political parties and refusal to obey the laws. Had they submitted to the jurisdiction which rightfully belongs to the state, they would have received its protection, and my best wishes for their success in enlightening the Indians.

The law does not punish Missionaries for residing among the Cherokees, but every white man who so resides contrary to its provisions, and if Missionaries will act illegally they must suffer the consequences.

Very respectfully, Y<sup>r</sup>s, &c.

GEORGE R. GILMER.

WE are authorized to...