

**INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE  
REV. J. ASHER, PASTOR OF  
SHILOH (COLOURED) BAPTIST  
CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, U.S.**

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Incidents in the Life of the Rev. J. Asher, Pastor of Shiloh (Coloured) Baptist Church,  
Philadelphia, U.S. by Wilson Armistead

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**WILSON ARMISTEAD**

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INCIDENTS  
IN THE  
LIFE OF THE REV. J. ASHER,  
PASTOR OF

SHILOH (COLOURED) BAPTIST CHURCH,

PHILADELPHIA, U. S.

AND

A Concluding Chapter

OF FACTS ILLUSTRATING THE UPRIGHTOUS PREJUDICE EXISTING  
IN THE MINDS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS TOWARD  
THEIR COLOURED BROTHERS,

FIVE

AN INTRODUCTION BY WILSON ARMISTEAD, ESQ.,

Of Leeds, Author of the "Tribune to the Negro."

LONDON:  
CHARLES GILPIN, 5, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT.

1850.

## NOTICE.

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THE main object which the writer of this little work has in view will be apparent to every reader. It is to give another representation of the unhappy prejudice which prevails in the United States among Christians, against their coloured brethren.

Besides this, however, he is anxious to purchase some valuable books, to assist him in the discharge of his ministerial duties. He does not like to *ask* kind friends for donations towards this object, though many have already given him various sums for it, but he has thought many would purchase this little volume, and perhaps the profits might enable him to attain his object, in a manner most agreeable to himself and the friends of the oppressed. Having frankly stated the object, he leaves it to the kind consideration of those who may feel disposed to assist him in the manner proposed.

LONDON, 5, QUEEN STREET PLACE,  
SOUTHWARK BRIDGE.  
MAY, 1850.



## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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“ Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun.”  
*Shakespeare.*

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THE coloured friend, an outline of whose life and Christian experience are recorded in the subsequent pages, has desired me to write something by way of Introduction.

As the Memoir will, I doubt not, have a considerable circulation amongst Christians of all denominations in this country, as well as in America, I am glad to avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded of bringing before the public, a subject which may be rather novel and startling to some on this side the Atlantic; but alas! too true, and too well known, across the great waters.

I allude to the unrighteous prejudice prevailing against the coloured people of the United States. This prejudice, which has been aptly compared to an



affluvia from the terrific Upas-tree of Slavery, subjects a large portion of our fellow-creatures to indignities on American soil, which in England we can hardly conceive possible, or only form a very small conception of.

In the first place I may state, that the subject of the following Memoir, Jeremiah Asher, has been driven from America to this country, to seek the aid of Christian brethren here, in raising a sum of money for defraying the expenses of a place of worship in Philadelphia, and also to promote the education of his degraded and much neglected race.

Though differing from him in some things, yet, as followers of one Lord, and professors of one common faith, I feel I should not be acting the part of a Christian were I to do otherwise, than extend the hand of fellowship to a man, in whom are to be discerned so obviously the lineaments of the Saviour.

Jeremiah Asher has been a frequent visitor at my house for the last few weeks, and I may say, that his unassuming manners, his gentlemanly behaviour, and his unaffected, yet warm-hearted and stedfast piety, have won for him my respect and esteem, which I believe he has also gained amongst all those Christian friends with whom he has associated in England. Whilst I have enjoyed the pleasure of his company, the words of the poet have often been brought to my remembrance :—

“ Ab Æthiope virtutem discce, et ne crede colori.”

Though our friend has met with unvaried sympathy in this country, and has been courteously and

kindly received by his white brethren of every class. On his return to America, the land of his birth, a land boastful of its freedom and of its liberty, there, he will, as a man of colour, participate in the reproach and neglect attaching to his race, however he may be distinguished by piety and moral character. When he tells his countrymen he has seen the white man and the coloured man walk arm in arm, he will not be believed.

Know all men throughout the world, and let it be now recorded by the British press, that in England we receive the coloured man the same as the white, conscious as we are that both derive life and health from the same beneficent Creator. Knowing also, that both have the same Almighty to serve, and feeling conscious that unless we meet as brethren here, and thus fulfil the great Christian law of love, we shall hardly be prepared to meet in heaven.

As we are but little acquainted in England with the real nature of the prejudicial feeling against the coloured people of America, I wish to occupy a few pages in its consideration. The extent to which it is carried in some parts of the United States is so great, that it quite amounts to a disease, which is justly termed Colorophobia, affecting its patients very singularly. For instance, were I to walk into one of their churches with my coloured friend Pennington, a Doctor of Divinity, we should throw the whole congregation into a state of terror and excitement. A coloured gentleman relates, that when he went into a church in New Jersey, as he entered, the minister

stopped, and the attention of the whole congregation was arrested.

In consequence of the odium which the degradation of slavery has attached to coloured people in America, they are everywhere dreadfully insulted and oppressed. It is not in slave-holding states alone that they are treated with scorn and disdain, but in the free northern states in deference to the south; white people refuse to eat, or ride, or walk, or associate with them. Seminaries of learning are closed against them; they are almost entirely banished from lecture-rooms; and in the house of God they are separated from their white brethren and sisters, as though they were afraid to come in contact with a coloured skin.

Coloured people are even excluded from the public institutions of their country, unless they visit them in the capacity of servants, or of menials in humble attendance upon the Anglo-American! Whoever heard of a more wicked absurdity in a Republican country? in the professedly free and enlightened America? The following is an extract from a pamphlet issued by a public institution in one of the chief cities of the United States. "The proprietors wish it to be understood that *people of colour* are not permitted to enter, *except when in attendance upon children and families.*"

In the Anti-Slavery Convention in London, in 1843, a delegate present said, "I will relate a circumstance illustrative of some of my early impressions of American society. That Christian philanthropist, the late Mr. James Cropper, frequently