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PUBLIC SCHOOL

IN

ITS RELATIONS TO THE NEGRO.

BY CIVIS.

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THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE NEGRO.

No. I.

In a series of articles over the signature of "Civis," which appeared in the *Religious Herald* last spring and summer, I demonstrated that the political principles which are invoked in the support of the public school are foreign to free institutions and fatal to liberty; that the theory upon which the system is based is well calculated to emasculate the energies of a people, and to debauch public and private morality; that the education of children is not the business of government, but the sacred and imperative duty of parents; that the assumption by the State, as the system requires, of the duties, privileges and prerogatives that belong only to the parental relation, is a wicked and dangerous denial of the reciprocal relations and obligations of parent and child, as proclaimed by nature and taught with solemn emphasis over and over by God, by Christ and his Apostles; that the cost of instruction at the public school is, as to those whose money supports it, greater than that of better instruction at the private school, and that the enforced charity is really an injury to the party receiving it and to the party robbed and wronged by unjust taxation; that granting, for the sake of argument, the system to be in itself desirable, Virginia is forbidden by simple honesty to patronize it, for she can only do it, as she is doing to-day, with money which is not her own, money withheld from its rightful owners, the creditors of the Commonwealth.

These positions and others of a kindred character, elaborated in the articles referred to, and fortified and illustrated by the facts of past and current history, have been assailed in various quarters, in some instances with marked ability, but in all with conspicuous and signal lack of success. Having shown that the public school is utterly indefensible, both as a matter of right and of policy, even if our population were homogeneous, I purpose in this article and in others, which may follow, to discuss the system in its relations to the negro that we may discover what policy is demanded alike by his interests and our own.

Ideas,—born of a spurious and pernicious philanthropy indigent to other latitudes, which sees the mote in a brother's eye not the beam in its own, which substitutes its unsupported dicta for the doctrines of Revelation, for the teachings of science and for the lessons of history and of experience,—are gaining foothold in our

midst, are becoming crystalized in our laws, and unless arrested or eradicated, will speedily fructify in a bitter harvest of woe.

And in this paper I shall say, as I have heretofore done, just exactly what I think. At a time when expediency seems to be the test of morals; when, as in the corrupt days of the Roman Commonwealth, men have one thing shut up in the heart, another ready on the tongue, I know of no medicine so likely to work good results as the full and truthful utterance of one's honest opinions, without reference to the coward dictates of a pliant expediency.

Further, I must premise that I am the friend of the negro, but a friend to him in his proper place of subordination; a far better friend than those who inflate him with ideas of his importance, which will only lead him to his ruin. Born and bred on a plantation of negroes, the owner of slaves until robbed of my property under the forms of law, I have always entertained the most kindly feelings towards them, which I still cherish whenever in their speech and conduct they acknowledge their true position, a thing—so strong in them is the instinct of inferiority—they never fail to do, except in the very few cases in which their brains have been addled by the miserable teachings of a fanatical philanthropy. Having observed all my life I well understand the peculiar qualities of the race, and they are exactly such as fit them for menial offices and subordinate positions, and of necessity disqualify them for the higher walks of life, and particularly for the great functions of citizenship.

1. The negro is distinguished by extreme docility, a most desirable quality in a menial; a most dangerous, a fatal one in a sovereign. Who in this Southern land has not witnessed day by day the most lovely exhibitions of this quality in the negro, humble, trustful and obedient? And yet they are banded by the same quality, as voters and sovereigns, into an unthinking mass ready to execute, without questioning, any behests of their leaders. The same quality that fits them for subordinate positions unfits them to be voters, and voters they ought not to be.

2. Notice their improvidence for the future. They seldom project their thoughts into the future and will not deny themselves to make provision for sickness, or old age, or for their children. Remonstrating a few years ago with a negro woman who had formerly belonged to me, and she too the mother of several children, for the reckless waste of her wages, I was met with the astounding answer that she was afraid she might die and leave money behind her unspent. I have ceased my efforts since to assist them in making a provision for the future, convinced that poverty is necessary to drive them to those menial offices which underlie civilized society and which alone they are competent to discharge. How different with the white man, who gives his youth to labor that his age may be crowned with ease, and projecting his thoughts beyond the limits of his life, practices a daily self-denial that his children may have a higher career and a nobler sphere than were possible to him.

Those who will not acquire property, who live from hand to mouth, are always desirous of change, and have been so in every age of the world; any change may improve their condition, none can injure it; and hence they constitute the inflammable material of mobs, riots and revolutions. How dangerous to put political power into the hands of such, and such negroes are, always have been, and always will be.

But this improvidence of the future, which so strongly marks the negro, and makes him so dangerous as a political element, actually increases his value as a mere menial and dependent. Untroubled by the cares of the morrow, he reposes with calm confidence on the firmer nerves and clearer brains of his superiors to supply his wants, and is happy and content in his humble sphere of allotted usefulness.

3. By virtue of the black pigment beneath his skin, placed there by Infinite Wisdom, though modern philanthropy tells us it is a great outrage, the negro is eminently a sweating animal. This is a fact of vast importance and should not be overlooked in the treatment of this subject. This coloring matter absorbs heat freely, carries it into the system, and there it drives the water to the surface, which in evaporation takes off a large amount of heat in the latent form. Evaporation is a cooling process. Thus as solar heat freely strikes in, tending to raise the temperature of the body beyond the normal point, perspiration and evaporation are induced and proceed at equal pace, by which processes this tendency is accurately counteracted, and the temperature of the body is kept constant. A horse ploughing in hot weather can kill in succession a dozen oxen urged at the same rate, chiefly because the horse sweats freely, the ox does not. The remarkable sweating capacity of the negro renders him objectionable in the cars, in the jury box, in the halls of legislation, in the crowds that assemble on the court-green, but wonderfully fits him for his proper functions as a laborer in tobacco and rice fields and on the great cotton and sugar plantations of low latitudes. In such work, which suits him as it suits no other race, and in doing which he is incomparably superior to any other race, he is useful and has been happy, and would be again if he were not constantly goaded by a fatal political policy and mischievous intermeddlers into visionary dreams and vague ambitions which stagger his feeble intellect, and, in many cases, render him restive and morose in the only sphere of life which he is competent to fill. Since this people landed on this continent, they have been gravitating from higher to lower latitudes, not by human but by Divine enactment, that they might find the physical conditions best suited to the law of their being, and, under the direction of a superior sagacity, follow those modes of life and perform that kind of labor best calculated to promote their own happiness and the general interests of mankind.

If it be said, as I know it will be said, that the qualities which I have attributed to the negro are in part the heritage of slavery, and

that we are in duty bound to educate the race in compensation of 250 years of labor, my ready and triumphant reply is:

1. That Domestic Slavery brought absolute savages into contact with civilization and taught them to be skillful laborers in agriculture, in household duties, and, to some extent, in the mechanic arts; that it was to them a School of Association that raised the race to a higher plane of life than it has ever reached in any other age or in any other quarter of the globe; that in the opinion of those even who have most fiercely denounced the institution, it has rendered them competent to the highest functions of life, the duties of political sovereignty.

2. That compensation for service rendered has been thrice made by the generous supply of their wants as well in the helpless periods of infancy and decrepitude as in vigorous and useful life; and by the tuition which they have received in this School of Association, resulting so conspicuously in their moral and intellectual improvement.

The history of this race may be explored in vain for a case in which these people have risen by inherent energy to a condition of independent civilized existence; in vain for a single instance even in which after having been as highly civilized as is possible for them, and then left to themselves with the arts and appliances of civilization in their hands, they have succeeded in making progress or even in holding their own.

The Liberian colony founded under the most favorable auspices after vast expenditures of treasure, and anxious and protracted thought by many of our best and wisest men, constantly guarded by influences and propped up by material support from this country and England, is yet in a tottering condition and seems unable to defend itself against the assaults of savage brothers.

In some of the West India Islands—Hayti, for instance—where by British philanthropy negroes have been made almost the exclusive owners of the soil, coffee and other intertropical products, once largely exported, have almost ceased to be articles of export; and plantations, before magnificent and wonderfully productive, are rapidly relapsing, under the ownership of the blacks, into original wilderness. Raising, almost without labor, in their fervid and fertile soil only a few yams, they rely almost entirely upon the spontaneous productions of the earth to support their lazy and unprofitable lives. The moulding and controlling influence of the white man being cancelled, they blend the teachings of the Bible with the baldest superstitions, and are fast reviving the feticism which their ancestors brought from the Guinea coast.

Were it not too painful to pursue the subject in that direction, I might find illustrations nearer home and show how corruption runs riot, and the car of progress turns back, and civilization, late in its noblest and loftiest type, wilts withers and dies before the hot breath of these black barbarians.

All the facts of negro history, his moral, intellectual and physical

peculiarities, particularly his facial and cranial configuration, point to the same conclusion, to wit: that he belongs to an inferior type of the human family, to a lower grade of organization. No man, familiar with the facts involved and competent to form a sound opinion, can believe that the negro is the equal of the Caucasian. The truth is, the negro is incapable of independent civilized existence. His God-given instincts, stronger than the logic and a surer and safer guide than the teachings of philanthropy, impel him to rely for support and guidance upon a clearer and a stronger wit than he can claim. He is, by necessity of intellectual weakness, a parasite. This explains his extreme docility, which renders him so agreeable and happy, and valuable as a menial, so dangerous a tool in the contests of politics.

These people so impulsive and docile, so reckless of the future and so oblivious of care, so patient of heat and of labor, incapable of logical and consecutive thought, unambitious, unenterprising, unprogressive, we have among us. How shall we treat them? A problem in sociology so important has never before demanded a solution. The development of our material resources, the perpetuity of our form of government, the conservation of our social system, and the interests and happiness alike of both races, are involved in the solution. If calmly and dispassionately we consider the facts of the case, if we study the history of the negro, his idiosyncracies and capabilities, it will not be difficult to discover the line at once of duty and of interest. On the other hand, if we ignore the differentia of the races, the peculiarities which God has impressed upon the negro, and proceed to reconstruct him after the approved pattern of a silly fanaticism, we shall commit one of those terrible blunders which are worse than crimes.

There is one plan by which, without cost to the State, the highest happiness and utmost usefulness of which the negro is capable, may be accomplished; there is another which will effectually destroy both his usefulness and his happiness, and render him liable, at any capricious moment, like a blind giant, to seize and tear down the pillars of our political edifice, involving at the same time an enormous expenditure of money, which we cannot suffer without the sacrifice of the good name, the sacred honor of the Commonwealth.

In the next number of the *Planter and Farmer* I hope to make application of the foregoing to the subject in hand.

CIVIS.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We have two correspondents writing under the *nom de plume* of "CIVIS," both of whom are prominently identified with the educational and agricultural interests of the South. The author of this article is favorably known to the public by the contribution to the *Religious Herald* last spring and summer of a series of articles on the "public school" referred to in this communication.]

[From the *Southern Planter and Farmer*, Jan'y, 1876.]

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE NEGRO.

No. II.

So different anatomically and physiologically are the two races from each other, that we are told on the highest medical authority that the treatment which is demanded for the recovery of a white man in fever and other forms of disease will be fatal to the negro; that the most successful practitioners educated at the North or in Europe, when they first come in contact with the negro and proceed to treat him in sickness on general principles, uniformly fail, and frequently with disastrous results, until by observation and trial they learn that special treatment is demanded by congenital peculiarities, both in organization and functions. We have already seen that the negro both in his intellectual and moral attributes is conspicuously inferior to the white man, so that there is a perfect correlation between his physical peculiarities and his immaterial nature. Inferiority is stamped plainly and indelibly on the negro alike in his intellectual, moral and physical being.

This line of demarcation between the races is not accidental or the result of outward surroundings; it has been fixed by the finger of God. Since the negro has been known to history, he has always been as we see him now. In our dealings with him, shall we ignore or attempt to obliterate this line of separation? It is greatly to be deplored, says modern philanthropy, that these differences exist. They constitute a great barrier to the success of its pet schemes of equality and fraternity. There have always been men, as there are to-day, wiser than God, and ready at a moment's notice to reconstruct the work of the matchless Architect. A distinguished scientist of our day has told us that the eye is a bungling piece of optical mechanism; and that, under his direction, the construction of that organ would have been vastly better. Not long ago, carpens and critics were fond of attacking the divine cosmogony, because three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered with water, an arrangement which restricts, they complained, our race to a small part of the planet. They, wiser than he who "spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast," would at farthest have covered only one-fourth of the earth with water, an arrangement which, we now perfectly know, would have rendered the land an absolute desert for lack of sufficient evaporating surface. I do not belong to the fanatical crew that dares to assail the Infinite Wisdom; that would

"Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the god of God."

As far as I can understand the forms and forces of matter, I see the most wonderful harmonies, manifold adaptations of material things to our wants and happiness, and even in many phenomena, which bring sorrow and suffering, a vindication of the ways of God to man. When and where I cannot understand, I am equally content to wonder and adore; believing, knowing that when the unknown becomes the known, as at last it may, it will equally attest the infinite wisdom and boundless beneficence of the Great Contriver.

It does not, however, appear to me difficult to explain why the negro, not by accident but by the act of God, is made inferior to the Caucasian. It is in perfect harmony with the whole economy of the world. The law of nature, which is always the law of God, is inequality, not equality; diversity, not uniformity; and the happiness of the whole animal kingdom is best subserved by this arrangement. "One star differeth from another star in glory;" no two trees in the forest, no two leaves even, are exactly alike; and every man is different from all other men, that live, or have lived, on the surface of the earth. Civilization requires an infinite variety of work, which in turn requires for its performance infinite gradations of intellect. The man who, accepting his destiny as indicated by his humble capacity, performs the lowest kind of menial labor, does work just as necessary in the economy of civilization as the profound astronomer who measures and weighs suspended worlds, and marks out their circling paths. The truth is that the number of those required to do the loftiest work of which the human intellect is capable, is very small; while larger and still larger numbers are required for lower and still lower work, so that those occupations are most thronged which least require intellectual strength and activity. It always has been so; and, dream and speculate as we will, it always will be so. When Christ said: "The poor ye have always with you," he stated a general truth, applicable not only to the age and country of which he spoke, but to all ages and to all countries. Of necessity it must be so, it is right that it should be so. Bootblacks and scavengers, cooks and chamber-maids, farm hands, and operatives in manufacturing establishments, must continue until chaos comes again. These and kindred occupations, constituting the very foundation of civilized society, require for the utmost efficiency of the work, little or no scholastic training on the part of the mere laborers. Nor can it be said that such work would be better done if the laborers were educated. So far from this being so, the difficulty of having it done at all would be greatly increased; and when done, it would be done by no means so well. For several reasons, this must be so. The fact that a laborer is educated, or thinks he is educated, beyond his calling, unfits him for that calling. If a man is engaged in work below his education, he feels degraded by it, and that sense of degradation compels him to do inferior work. No laborer can do good work unless he is proud of his work. I know of no spectacle more pitiable than that

of a man compelled by necessity to engage in menial labor for a support, whose education, either in fact or in his conception, fits him for a higher plane of life. He is far less happy, and does less work, and that less efficiently, than the simple laborer by his side, whose thoughts never rise higher than his calling, and whose guileless heart is made happy by a word of praise from his employer.

Again, the more simple a piece of machinery is, the more manageable it is, and the better it does the work for which it was designed. When we complicate it so as to render it capable of doing several things, it will not do any one of these things so well as the simple machine constructed solely with reference to that thing. A mower and reaper combined is less efficient as a mower than a simple mower; is less efficient as a reaper than a simple reaper. And so that intelligence and culture, and only that, which is required for one's calling, best fits him for the duties of that calling. The bootblack is not a better bootblack, but a worse one, the ditcher is not a better ditcher, but a worse one, if he can also calculate a solar eclipse or read with a critic's ken the choral odes of the Greek dramatists.

A higher than human authority hath taught us that we cannot serve two masters. Faithfully and well to discharge the duties of one sphere of life positively disqualifies us for those of a lower or of a higher sphere. Contentment in our allotted place—and a place is allotted to us all—is at once the plain dictate of reason and the positive injunction of inspiration. A laborer will never do full and efficient work unless he finds not only his support but his happiness in his labor, content to leave to those more gifted than he, the problems of science and the perplexities of finance. And such a course is always the laborer's choice; unless the vile spirit of unrest and discontent has been stirred within him by the constant teachings of a blasphemous philosophy.

The practice of men in the employment of menial labor is in entire harmony with our doctrine, and at once attests and demonstrates its truth. The farmer always prefers as laborers in his field those accustomed and competent only to such work; nor will he employ, except from necessity or as a matter of charity, applicants whose thoughts have taken a wider and a loftier range. To succeed in work that is below one's capacity and attainments is just as impossible as to succeed in work that is above one's capacity and attainments; and this the practical man, who, in all matters relating to his business and interests, has more sense than all the philanthropists and reformers in the world put together, well knows, and acts accordingly. Not long ago, I had a conversation with a prominent gentleman, a farmer and preacher, who combatted this view; and yet in the conversation it cropped out that he had just refused employment, though greatly needing labor on his farm, to two strong young men, fresh from the Normal School at Hampton, on the ground, as acknowledged, that persons engaged as they had been would not suit his work, nor it them. What this man did, every-

body else, under similar circumstances, does. The simple fact that men uniformly so act, proves that such action is based on the strongest and most conclusive reasons. The cook, that must read the daily paper, will spoil your beef and your bread; the sable pickaninny, that has to do his grammar and arithmetic, will leave your boots unblacked and your horse uncurried.

Some—and a great many too—are and must be mudsills. Some are and must be “hewers of wood and drawers of water.” Such is the decree, and the language quoted is that of the Almighty. This doctrine, so unpalatable to our fanatical optimists, has been most fiercely attacked; but these assaults, hot with wrath, have made no impression on the thick bosses of Jehovah’s buckler.

Society, left to the operation of natural causes, will take its proper order of stratification. Each member, according to his inherent energy and capacity, will find his proper place in just gradation. To protect the individual in his rights, not to form society, is the function of government. As individuals have or lack capacity, they will rise or sink; and they will rise who ought to rise, and they will sink who ought to sink. To check, or attempt to check, one from sinking who ought to sink, is as great a cruelty to him and as disastrous to society as to prevent or attempt to prevent one from rising who ought to rise. That father would be cruel in the extreme and inflict a great damage on the community who should hold, or attempt to hold, in lowly life, a son competent to the grandest achievements; but not more cruel nor more injurious to society than that other father who places his son in a position above his capacity, and, say, holds him there, a position which requires of him duties that he cannot discharge, and devolves upon him responsibilities, that he cannot meet, rendering worthless, and, from a sense of worthlessness, wretched, one who, in his proper place, would have been both useful and happy. That every man should promptly find his proper level is demanded alike by the happiness of the individual and the general interests of the community. An attempt on the part of the State to place all on a common level, is beyond the range of its just powers, and is as silly as it is vain. The great Father of Waters, as he moves to the sea, bears on his turbid bosom many thousand tons of solid matter, which is accurately assorted and distributed along his course and at his mouths by the operation of physical laws too powerful for human agency to contravene; and so the laws of God’s moral government, not less constant nor less powerful than those that control the physical universe, determine the stratification of human society. We may endeavor by legislation, as weak as it is wicked, to prevent this stratification or to make it homogeneous and uniform; but so sure as God is stronger than man, the attempt will end in failure, inflicting, however, untold misery on individuals and crippling, it may be, the industries of the globe.

We have drifted far from the simplicity of our fathers. They held that government is instituted for the protection of individual

rights; now the individual is the prey of government, which crushes him with tyrannous exactions, while the highest aim of statesmanship consists in the discovery of new subjects of taxation. And now, when the President of the Republic, (can we call it a Republic?) "whereof," he sapiently tells us, "one man is as good as another," recommends in his last annual message to Congress, compulsory education by the Federal Government; and, with a logic, of which I will only say that it is worthy of its source, proposes to tax the church to support the school, backed in this latter matter, I regret to add, by the feeble support of the Governor of Virginia, it is high time that thoughtful men should bestir themselves, demand a new reckoning, and make the supreme effort, lest the ship of state drift into worse than Prussian absolutism. The fact that the President makes such a proposition, and that, too, in the most solemn and formal way, ought to arouse us from our lethargy and make us open our eyes to the alarming drift and tendency of the times. It is nothing less than that the Federal Government should stretch out its Briarean arms from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and lay its cold and heavy hand upon all the children of "the nation," compelling them to schools supported by universal taxation, prescribing what they shall learn, and what they shall not learn, forbidding the reading of the Bible and the bare mention of the name of Christ, forming their minds and their morals, taking charge of their health and their habits, constituting itself a sort of wet nurse to the little urchins, and leaving to parents, upon whom alone is devolved, as well by instinct and affection as by the repeated and most solemn injunctions of Inspiration, the education of their children, little more than the function of reproduction. Under such a system, the path to despotism is short and plain; and we may expect to see, as we most abundantly do see, wherever the scheme has been long intrenched and so has had time to fructify, an utter relaxation of parental and filial obligation and manifold forms of atheism and irreligion. But the Federal Government has as much right to intervene in this matter as the State Government; it belongs to neither. The education of children belongs to parents and to them only; nor can they delegate or surrender it to the civil authority, State or Federal, without guilt.

But, it is maintained, that a necessity is laid upon Virginia to support the public school because of the presence of negroes as citizens in our midst, whose equality is asserted by the law and maintained by the power of the Federal Government.

Let us look into this. When an inferior and a superior race come into contact with each other, one of these three things will take place. 1st. The inferior race will disappear; or 2d. The races will amalgamate; or 3d. The inferior race must submit, under forms more or less despotic, to the domination of the superior race.

1. When Europeans landed on this continent, their instincts demanded that so vast and fertile a domain, pregnant with such mighty and brilliant possibilities, should not be left to the proprietorship of

wild savages, incompetent to cultivate the soil or explore the mine. They were but cumberers of the ground, and must give way to those who could utilize the gifts of nature to the general benefit of mankind. On the other hand, the proud spirit of the haughty Indian, after many a bloody protest, it is true, sullenly recognized the inevitable logic of this demand, and so he has constantly retired before the advancing wave of civilization. Taught by instinct, he felt that he was unable to compete, for the means of living, with a race whose superior sagacity moulded the forms and bent the forces of nature to their will. Thus, the mighty tribes that once lorded it over this continent, following the course of the sun, and vanishing, as they retired, like April snows, are represented now in our western wilds by only a few degraded and broken spirited remnants, the miserable victims of the cruel charity of the Government—for governmental charity is always cruel, and corrupting too—famishing on fibrous beef, and poisoned with putrid pork. As the tide of life moves further westward, the Indian, as heretofore, must abandon his reservation, and soon his only place will be in history. This is one method of solution, which we have witnessed with our own eyes, and, so sure as the laws of nature are constant, we shall witness it again, unless we change the hideous policy to which we are committed.

2. Under favoring circumstances and conditions, the races will amalgamate. Nature implants in the superior race antagonisms and antipathies to the inferior, which except under abnormal circumstances, effectually protects the purity of its strain. The greater the disparity, the stronger these antipathies, and therefore the less the liability to amalgamation. But howsoever great the disparity, amalgamation is inevitable under certain conditions, as where the inferior race vastly outnumbers the superior, or when the two races are kept together by external force. The amalgamation of the blacks and whites—a crime against blood and lineage, against man and God, against which I raise my hands in horror and disgust, and exonerate my conscience, if I can do no more, by a solemn and indignant protest—is encouraged and invited by the law, which recognizes the political equality of the negro, and ties the races together in the bonds of political partnership.

If the negro, as the law assumes, is equal to the great functions of citizenship, is a copartner with us in a common government, to discharge the same duties, meet the same responsibilities, and share the same destiny, then the races ought to assimilate as thoroughly as possible, and every bar to their perfect blending ought to be removed. Mixed schools, which we barely escaped—if, indeed, we have escaped—only because race instinct, though weakened and blinded by the hot passions born of strife and blood, was stronger than the logic of the law, in which the same training and instructions should be given and antagonisms worn off by constant contact and association, is the necessary, the logical demand of the doctrine of equality. Nor let us deceive ourselves by saying that political equality is one thing and social equality another. An adjective will not save us. Equality

is equality. If the negro is fit, as the law in question declares he is, to make laws for the control of our conduct and property; to give orders as a colonel or general, which we must implicitly obey; to sit in senatorial robes; to wear the spotless ermine; to occupy the chair of Washington, he is certainly fit to eat with us at our tables, to sleep in our beds, to be invited into our parlors, and to do all acts and things which a white man may do.

The intent and animus of the law, the pressure of the whole machinery of the Federal Government, and of the State Government too, in so far as it recognizes the equality of the negro in its insane attempts to qualify him by education for the rights and duties of citizenship, tend to a common point, viz., to wear off race antagonisms by contact and association, to pave the way consequently to assimilation and amalgamation, and thus degrade into mulattoes and molungeons, the noblest type of the noblest race that ever floated on the tide of time. No thanks to the law if this result does not promptly and fully ensue. It is as criminal as if miscegenation were the order of the day; for it plies all its logic and displays all its seductions to effect that object, from which we are saved, in so far as we are saved, only by those antagonisms and antipathies of race, stronger than human legislation, implanted in us by our Maker to protect purity of blood and accomplish the "survival of the fittest."

If it be said in reply that this very principle of race antagonism is an effectual bar to hybridization, I answer:

1. That if such be the tendency of the law, it must produce its effect; that it is as impossible to annihilate a force in morals as it is to annihilate a force in physics; that the law makes its fiercest assaults upon the very principle which is relied upon to combat or modify its tendencies, and that this principle is liable to be so weakened and emasculated by the varied appliances operating against it, as to be unable at last to antagonize the baleful tendencies of the law. The law, however weak in comparison with the antagonizing principle, must produce its effects, which will become more manifest and more disastrous as the law becomes stronger and the opposing principle weaker. And this is exactly the tendency of things. As we submit to this legislation, and applaud and adopt it, its power over us becomes greater and our repugnance less to it and to its results, so that a time may come when, both from the increasing strength of the law and the growing weakness of human virtue, our race may be hopelessly ruined.

2. Beware how you subject human nature to temptation. For us, as weak as we are sinful, the only safe philosophy is found in the prayer of our Savior, "Lead us not into temptation." How dare we support and sanction a law which daily displays before society and our children a constant temptation to corruption of blood? It is a crime against decency and morals, against race and blood, against God and nature.

If we are not utterly debauched by the temptation, the law is not

the less criminal; for we are saved, so far as we are saved, by a principle outside of the law, antagonistic to it, the eradication of which is the supreme object of the law, and of those who conceived and framed it.

But we have no option, we are told, except submission. I reply that we can submit without guilt to anything that we cannot prevent; but that when we adopt, and applaud and defend this law, and, with superserviceable weakness, extend its application, we are as guilty, we are more guilty than its original framers. And this thing, and nothing else, we are doing, when we go to the exhausted Exchequer of the Commonwealth, and take from it money—money that does not belong to the State, but to its creditors—and apply it to the support of the public school that the asserted doctrine of negro equality may be made good. In this we cannot offer the plea of compulsion; no federal law requires it; we do it of our own volition; and in doing it, we grant that the negro is competent to political sovereignty and endeavor to prepare him for it; and thus we commit ourselves to the dogma of negro equality and become responsible for all its hideous consequences. This law, born of blood, is destined to die, as the passions engendered by war subside, unless we adopt it and approve it, and so infuse new life into it, and proceed with supreme guilt and folly to incorporate it into our State legislation. Shall we do it? God forbid.

3. A third course has been indicated, the discussion of which is reserved for another article.

CIVIS.

[From the Southern Planter and Farmer, February, 1876.]

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE NEGRO.

No. III.

If we do not wish the negro to vanish like the Indian from existence, nor to amalgamate with the whites, and thus to originate a population as worthless as the mongrels of Mexico, all that is left us is simply to let him alone, and leave him to occupy his natural position of subordination. This is the position which the negro instinctively seeks, nor is he happy or comfortable in any other. Everything has been done that diabolical wit could suggest to make the negro assert his equality, and yet he will not; incendiary philanthropists have passed through the length and breadth of our land, and endeavored to scatter firebrands among his race, and still he is quiescent; the Federal Government has expended millions of treasure and mobilized mighty armies to infuse into him sufficient

courage for the maintenance of the mendacious dogma, and yet no sooner has the tread of armed legions faded from his ears than he turns to seek his only safety in obscurity. Coming from the hot crowd, where he has been galvanized by inflammatory rhetoric into a spasmodic feeling of importance, so soon as he touches the cool air and comes in contact with a white man, all his injected courage oozes out, and by his language, his attitude and bearing, he proclaims his inferiority. In all the annals of history I know of nothing so striking and so conclusive as the humility, the general quiet behavior, of the negro, though every effort is made and every possible suggestion offered to vex and goad him into a contrary course. They are sometimes, it is true, lashed into local and temporary disturbances; the wonder of wonders is, that these disturbances are not general and constant. The negro, true to nature and true to truth, stoutly denies the heresy of equality. And why should we endeavor to make him belie the instincts of his nature, and seek to force him into a position in which he knows he is unable to sustain himself? There are no people in the world so kindly and so indulgent to the negro as the white people of the South—none so bitterly and implacably hostile to him. When he comes, as he generally does, humble, docile and obedient—in a word, as an inferior—he receives the most kindly and generous consideration; but when, as is sometimes the case, he assumes impudent airs and utters impudent words, or in any way deports himself as an equal, then he stirs the blood and fires the pride of race, and he must take the consequences or wilt at once into submission. The unvarnished truth must be told, and the sooner we recognize it in our conduct the better for us all. *The whites and the negroes cannot live together as equals.* Why cannot this be done? our modern reformers ask. I answer: because God, for wise reasons not difficult to be understood, has made it impossible. It is forbidden by a law of nature, which applies not only to the human race, but to the entire animal kingdom. If a game cock and a dunghill rooster be placed in the same barnyard, the latter must submit, or he must die. Numberless illustrations of this principle will occur to the readers of this journal, accustomed as they are to observe the habits of animals. This race antagonism becomes stronger as we ascend the scale of animal life, and is most pronounced in man, for the plain reason that its object—the preservation of purity of strain—is more important than in the case of the inferior animals! Inferior and superior races, whether of man or of the lower orders of animals, cannot live together except as inferiors and superiors. If we put them on a plane of equality and hold them there, the weaker dies. The law of the Federal Government declares the equality of the negro; but the declaration of the law does not make the dogma true. It were as easy to make the James river the equal of the Mississippi, or the Alleghany mountains as lofty as the Andes, by a presidential pronouncement.

The public school system recognizes the doctrine of negro equal-

ity, and professes to prepare him for the highest functions of life, the duties of political sovereignty. If he is, by congenital inferiority, not competent to such functions, the attempt to prepare him for them is a manifest absurdity. If he is competent to such functions, then inferiority does not belong to his race. Having shown, in former articles before referred to, that the public school, even without reference to the question of races, is utterly indefensible, both as a matter of morals and of policy, I oppose it in its application to the negro race:—

1. Because it is an assertion, in the most dangerous form, of the hideous doctrine of negro equality. How this blasphemous heresy seeks the amalgamation of the races as its culmination, was clearly shown in our last article. I cannot dwell on this topic; it is too revolting, it is too disgusting for contemplation.

2. I oppose it because its policy is cruelty in the extreme to the negro himself. It instills into his mind that he is competent to shine in the higher walks of life, prompts him to despise those menial pursuits to which his race has been doomed, and invites him to enter into competition with the white man for those tempting prizes that can be won only by a quicker and profounder sagacity, by a greater energy and self-denial, and a higher order of administrative talent than the negro has ever displayed. In such a competition the negro inevitably goes down. To invite the negro from those pursuits which require firm muscles and little intelligence, to those callings which demand less muscle and higher intelligence, is to invite him to his sure extermination. To require the ponderous Percheron to equal the fleet Arabian courser, as he sweeps the plain, or the latter to draw the heavy loads which scarcely tax the muscles or warm the shoulders of the former, would be the last degree of cruelty to the animals, and render them at the same time worse than worthless. More cruel are we, and a vastly greater damage do we inflict upon society, when, prompted by a silly fanaticism, we seduce the negro from those occupations in which alone he can be useful and content, and tempt him to a competition which he cannot accept without his ruin. It is as pleasing as it is instructive to witness how labor is allotted here in the South. We find negroes universally preferred and almost exclusively employed as cooks and chambermaids, as barbers and bootblacks, as laborers on the farm and in tobacco factories. As I write, my head is dull and my eyes are heavy from loss of sleep caused by the sickness of an infant child; and yet the nurse, a negro girl of seventeen years, upon whom the heavy work has chiefly fallen, and whose sleep has been interrupted several times every night—during some nights many times—is as fresh to-day as when the doctor was summoned two weeks ago. I have known her to be aroused five or six times a night, and yet not to lose from these several interruptions combined a half hour's sleep, for in thirty seconds after relieved of active duty she is soundly asleep again. This result, I am sure, is due to a low type of cerebral organization, to her mental inactivity, which really fits her for the duties of her

place, but would be a supreme disqualification for the higher avocations of life. She is withal tenderly affectionate to her charge, cheerfully responds to all the calls made upon her, and I prefer her in her place to any white girl in the commonwealth. Would it be kind to her, would it be just to society, which must always demand just such duties as she performs, to tempt her to aspire to a higher position denied her by Him who made her as she is?

In such pursuits as I have indicated, the negro is preferred from a thorough conviction, born of observation and self-interest, the safest guides, that he is more docile and manageable, more efficient and happy, than whites are when engaged in the same sort of work. But the negro has no administrative faculty; he cannot forecast and plan, he cannot arrange and combine. How stupid to teach, or attempt to teach, a being so organized, that a time will come when he will be able to determine the parallax of a fixed star, or solving the problems of political economy, will at last realize the conception of the poet and "read his history in a nation's eyes!" Let him imbibe the fatal lesson and proceed to grapple with the Caucasian as a competitor for a livelihood, on a plane too lofty for his intellect, and his doom is sealed. Let him confine himself to menial pursuits, to certain kinds of mechanical labor, and he will have a wide berth; he will encounter no opposition, and if he does, can conquer it, for in such labor he excels. Moreover, in such callings he has the kindly encouragement, the protecting sympathy, of the superior race, and thus his comfort, his happiness and his usefulness are best accomplished. But let him attempt to move out of his orbit and seek a higher circle, to wrest from more skilful hands the work for which he has no aptitude, then he will find every inch of ground fiercely and stoutly contested; then he will arouse into opposition the pride of race, which will vindicate its native dignity, and with unpitiful triumph bear him hopelessly down. His strength, his only strength, is his weakness. Now, the theory of the public school denies all this, and, in endeavoring to qualify the negro as a co-partner with the whites in the administration of the government, asserts in the strongest way his unqualified equality. It were strange, indeed, if a doctrine so flattering to the vanity of a weak and credulous race did not find, though opposed to their instincts, some adherents among them. Hence, we find that in our cities and villages, where they have been most plied and corrupted by this doctrine, they are asserting, to an extent greater or less, their importance with a result that is mournfully told by mortuary statistics. Awaiting my family physician in his office a few days ago, and picking up a copy of the *Virginia Medical Monthly*, I noticed that in all the cities reported (Richmond, Norfolk, Lynchburg, Petersburg, Selma, Mobile,) the death rate is notably greater among the blacks than among the whites. Why this persistent uniformity? The negroes to-day all over this country are dying more rapidly than the whites. Once it was not so. They increased with marvellous rapidity, the supreme proof of physical comfort. Let the negro

imbibe more and still more of this false and poisonous philosophy, and, led by its malign inspirations, leave those lowly walks in which alone he can make a living and be happy, then will the swift extermination of the race put an eternal quietus upon all our speculations as to his status in politics and in society.*

3. I oppose the public school, because it brings paralysis to our industrial pursuits. We are poor to the point of derision; yet exhaustless wealth lies hidden in our soil. Broad acres of deep alluvium, which would yield to honest toil some sixty and some an hundred fold, lie untilled, and only serve to poison the atmosphere with mephitic exhalations. The utilization of our natural resources is our only pathway to prosperity. The great need of this Commonwealth is labor—labor that can be relied on and controlled. Work, work, work is our salvation. And yet, instead of encouraging labor, our legislation puts it as much as possible under ban. The framers of the patchwork constitution under which we live have displayed a fertile ingenuity in creating the largest number possible of public offices, that idlers and incompetents might occupy them as bomb-proofs from labor. Constables and sheriffs, assessors and tax gatherers, publicans of one sort or another, swarm through the Commonwealth and devour our living and eat out our substance. To tax, tax, tax, is to our Virginia statesman the full conception of his duty, while the revenues thus wrung from a reluctant people are applied not to satisfy the supreme demand of honor, but to support burglars and thieves in comfort and idleness, and foster the mischievous experiments of quixotic philanthropy. Session after session the Legislature is approached by immigration agencies for appropriations to enable them to bring laborers from abroad, and yet we turn and expend annually with suicidal folly, vastly larger sums of money to render worthless, and worse than worthless, a vastly better class of laborers in our midst. Can the force of folly

*I have calculated the ratio of white and black mortality for the cities of Richmond, Norfolk and Lynchburg, Va.; representing a total white population of 51,952, and a total colored population of 41,713—total population, white and colored, 93,665. The mortuary reports for these cities, in my possession, cover a period of twenty one months (March 1874 to November 1875, inclusive). During these twenty one months, there was a total white mortality of 1,900, a total colored mortality of 2,599. In other words, there was one white death to every twenty seven of the white population, and one colored death to every sixteen of the colored population. The reports from Petersburg, Virginia, cover a period of only three months (September, October, November, 1875). The white population is 8,744; the colored population 10,185. During the three months, there were fifty-three deaths among the whites, and one hundred and four among the colored, or one white death to every one hundred and sixty five of the white population, one colored death to every ninety-eight of the colored population.

It may be of further interest to note that regarding the first three named Virginia cities, during the twenty one months stated, there were four hundred and eighty still-births; of these the race is not given in thirty-three cases, but one hundred and forty-six white still-births are tabulated, and three hundred and one colored—making the total of four hundred and eighty. Omitting any reference to the thirty-three still births, the races of which are not given, the ratio of white still births is one to every three hundred and fifty-six white population, and the ratio of colored still-births, one to every one hundred and thirty eight of the colored population.

further go? Up to 1860 the exports of the South in the shape of tobacco, cotton, sugar, &c., were several times greater than the exports from equal areas in any other part of the Union, and kept the balance of trade in our favor—(there lies the secret of our financial troubles). I have seen the statistics, though I cannot lay my hands on them now, which demonstrate that our Southern agriculture, during the period alluded to, gathered from our fertile soil more wealth than was ever acquired by similar means since the dawn of authentic history. These grand results were chiefly due to the labor of negro slaves, who almost fed and clothed the world. The crude products of their labor were fashioned by superior skill, all over the civilized globe, into infinite forms of comfort, of elegance, and of luxury. And in such congenial employment the negro was comfortable and happy to an extent never realized before by any other laboring class since time began. His eyes stood out with fatness, and joy exultant burst from his tuneful throat. With happy confidence he relied upon a clearer head to direct his steps, and loved the generous hand that supplied his wants. This race, perfectly adapted, as we have seen, by their moral, intellectual and physical attributes, to field labor in low latitudes; better for such work, incomparably better, than Irish or Scandinavians, than Scotch or English, than Dutch or Swiss—better even than the olive pigtailed of the Flowery Kingdom—we teach, or attempt to teach, to despise those lowly walks in which alone they can be useful and happy, and disregarding the laws of nature, which can never be violated with impunity, to aspire to the shop and the counter, the office, the pulpit, the bar, the bench, the hustings, the warrior's wreath, the statesman's civic crown. Are we in our dotage? Debased and corrupt, have we at last become the victims of that supreme infatuation, which forebodes destruction from the gods? The negro, tutored under the old regime, inoculated therefore with just conceptions of himself and others, and so protected against the malignant virus of modern philanthropy, is still the best field laborer in the world. The negroes who are growing up, or have grown up in the last decade, are sadly unreliable. But if they are idle and thriftless, the fault is ours, not theirs. That they should behave as well and work as well as they generally do, is a great marvel. The thrusting of the negro into politics, against every dictate of prudence and common sense, without a precedent in all the annals of time to sanction it, is what ruins him as a laborer. Is he not a factor of the government? Dim visions of ease and idleness flit before his beclouded mind, and stagger his feeble intellections. The President of "the nation" invokes his assistance and leans upon him for support. Flattered by and feeling his importance as a political element, bearing the weight of empire on his shoulders, he is no longer content to crush the clods, nor proud to guide the shining plough and turn the stubborn glebe. The lofty duties of citizenship call him from the swamp and the ditch, from the farmyard and the field. With simple wants, which—so feeble is his moral sense—he

can supply without labor, and almost without danger, is it strange that it is unsafe to rely upon him for faithful and steady labor? And shall we, at the expense of the bleeding honor of the commonwealth, endeavor to raise the negro to a class of duties which he will never comprehend, nor with safety can even attempt to discharge, and in the process utterly unfit him for that kind of labor which is the great demand of the day, and in the performance of which he excels every other people on the earth.

4. If all I have written be destitute of force, still there remains an objection to the system, which is *absolutely conclusive*, unless indeed the sense of honor is dead within us beyond the possibility of resurrection. Simple honesty forbids that we should support a mammoth charity, however worthy, with money which does not belong to the State, money wrongfully withheld from its rightful owners, the creditors of the Commonwealth. To support the system, even granting it to be desirable *per se*, is, under existing circumstances, a high crime; a crime of the deepest dye and most malignant type, which no argument, no necessity can justify.

We owe a debt of more than thirty millions. It was contracted by our own people through legislatures fairly chosen and representing the will of the people. If it had been created by the new element forcibly injected into our economy, as is the case with the debts of some of the States south of us, repudiation might perhaps be entertained. But *we* created it. Nor was it created for objects which have been swept away by the convulsions of war. We are to-day in the enjoyment of the benefits purchased by this debt. We are not required to pay for a dead horse. A magnificent monument, by which we propose to perpetuate to coming ages the form and the features of the Father of his Country, stands on our Capitol Square, but it is still unpaid for. How dare the State insult the memory of Washington by an act of grand larceny! If his spirit could infuse that inanimate bronze, his indignant soul would shiver the effigy into atoms! What Virginian does not burn with indignation and blush with shame, when he sees the Commonwealth, late the synonym of chivalry and honor, chaffer and higgler with her creditors for abatement and compromise! If an honest man be pressed with debt, he makes all the money he can, reduces expenses to the minimum, and turns over to his creditors the excess of income over barely necessary expenses. But if a man, burdened with debt, support a style of living more costly and luxurious than he indulged in his prosperity, and plead his poverty as a justification of non-payment, he simply adds mendacity to theft. Let States be judged by the same rule. From them is due, in a higher sense, a pure allegiance, an unqualified obedience to justice. What shall we say to the plea of poverty put up in behalf of Virginia, when we know that with an area one-third less and a population a fourth less than in 1860, the expenses of the Government are more than two and a half times greater than when the State was in the plenitude of its wealth. The Governor in his last message, through many paragraphs of pompous rhetoric,

recommends a ruthless retrenchment in all the departments of the Government, and to the same end, a remodeling of the Constitution; but when he sees the inevitable application of his ideas, adds with bated breath: "This recommendation means no interference with the public school system." "O, most lame and impotent conclusion!" This system which abstracts \$500,000 per annum from State funds, and embracing local taxation, costs considerably more than a million, we are required to support, while the honor of the State is bleeding at every pore, and its creditors are coolly told to stand aside until we have concluded a costly experiment in governmental philanthropy. Shall we have the brazen effrontery to plead our poverty in justification of our conduct, when we expend annually \$1,584,000 to meet the expenses of our State Government, not including interest on the public debt; while from 1850 to 1860, the annual average cost of a vastly better Government, embracing a larger area and a greater population, was only \$588,000. How can we look our creditors in the face and talk about our poverty, and propose postponement or reduction of interest, when rioting, it would seem, in excessive wealth, we appropriate from State funds alone to the costly luxury of public schools an amount, which, fifteen years ago was sufficient to defray all the expenses of the Government? If the expenses of our State Government were one-third what they are or less, we should have a Government incalculably better; for all money raised by taxation beyond what is simply necessary is only a fund for corruption. Our people groan beneath excessive taxation, not because they are unwilling to bear the just burdens of government; but because they know that their hard earnings are used, not to save the plighted faith of the Commonwealth, but to support the lazy incumbents of unnecessary offices; to provide fuel and lodgings, food and raiment, for rogues and scoundrels, three-fourths of whom would be more suitably punished at the whipping-post; to meet the heavy demands of a bald experiment in universal education, based on false theories of government, false doctrines in morals, repugnant to the traditions and to the genius of our people. If we would apply to the State debt the sums annually appropriated to the support of the public schools, we would be able to pay full interest and create a sinking fund besides. Thus easy it is to pay our debt; to throttle the vampire that is sucking our blood; to get relief from that incubus that paralyzes our industries and keeps capital from our borders. Doing this, Virginia will be welcomed, thrice welcomed, and received with happy plaudits, into the family of honest commonwealths. Doing this, joy will suffuse her face, and honor, quickening her pulses into healthful and happy play, will send the life current in tingling ecstasy through her veins. Doing this, the dark cloud of repudiation will vanish into thin air, and Virginia, radiant with her ancient glories, will stand forth, "redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled." Can we hesitate?

A State that will not pay its honest debts, has lived too long. The very existence of a State, so dishonored, is a crime, and the prolific

parent of crime. The State is to its citizens the rule of right, the very embodiment of inviolable justice. To enforce among its subjects a just regard for mutual rights, the State imposes fines and forfeitures, uses chains and manacles, builds jails and penitentiaries, constructs the gallows and the guillotine. But when the State becomes itself an evil-doer, commits those acts which it punishes in its subjects, tramples under foot the eternal justice which it professes to enforce and to dispense, then it debauches the morals of its subjects, who have been taught to look to it for inspiration and for guidance.

There is among us in this latter half of the 19th century, a laxity about debts, public and private, which would have disgraced the ethics of pagan Rome. They called a debt *aes alienum*, another's money; with us, when a man gets another's money, by borrowing or otherwise, it is, in many cases, most effectually his own. Stay laws and bankrupt acts, at once the evidence and the means of corruption, enable him in many ways to bar payment. Nor does he lose caste by his ill-gotten wealth. Luxurious parlors open to receive him, and are honored by his presence; his wife and daughters flaunt in silks and flutter in brocade; his splendid equipage flings mud from its whirring wheels on the obscure pedestrian with whose money, perchance, it was bought. When, even in the corrupt days of the Roman commonwealth, Cicero was approached with a proposition for new tablets—obliteration of debts—the indignant Consul answered he would give new tablets, but under the auctioneer's hammer. Nor is it difficult to find the cause of this woful putridity of morals. The two Governments under which we live, have, for fifteen years, shown an utter disregard, have affected on the grand scale, an utter annihilation, of the property rights of the citizen; have themselves committed, over and over, those crimes which just governments always punish in their subjects. Is it strange that the individual should forget the distinction between mine and thine, should have his sensibilities utterly obtunded, when the State, to which he has been taught to look as the impersonation of justice, as his exemplar in morals and in conduct, abuses the confidence reposed in its honor, and denies the obligations of its plighted faith? If the State, upon which rests supremely the obligation of immutable justice, can plunder and rob on the grand scale, why not he in feeble imitation on the small?

And so, descending step by step, we have learned to entertain the idea of repudiation. Calmly we walk to the edge of that awful chasm and look down into its dismal depths. Shall Virginia take that fatal plunge? No sacrifice would be too great to prevent it. But none is required. It is only necessary to be content to live as we lived in our purer and happier days. If we do this guilty thing, it will be the blackest picture in the book of time. The act will have no extenuation. For one, I say it deliberately, I prefer the annihilation of her sovereignty, the obliteration of her name from history, and from the memory of men.

If Virginia is to commit this crowning infamy, I trust it will appear that they, who can justly claim the proud heritage of her glory, were guiltless of the sin; that Virginia, brave in war and wise in peace, renowned in history and in romance, the lofty idol of gallant and knightly sons, preserved, so long as she was free, her honor unsullied; that the noble mother, convulsed with mortal agony—herself no longer—stooped to this last disgrace only after she had been bound and manacled, and a baser blood had been injected, at a tyrant's bidding, into her indignant veins.

CIVIS.

[From the Southern Planter and Farmer, May, 1876.]

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE NEGRO.

No. IV.

The negro, we are told, is a voter, and our own safety and protection demand that we should educate him and so prepare him for the intelligent discharge of the duties of citizenship. To this I answer:

1. That fully believing that such a result will never be reached, I am utterly unwilling to expend vast sums of money, wrung from an impoverished and tax-burdened people, in a silly attempt to accomplish an impossibility.

2. If the negro, or rather his special friends for him, assert his equality, then let *him* make good the assertion. That they, who with hot indignation deny the revolting doctrine, should yet be heavily taxed to prove it true, is an extreme experiment on human patience. And yet, if with meek pusillanimity we submit to heavy taxation in the furtherance of negro education, we thereby put into the problem an element that renders its solution impossible. Under such a system, any success or seeming success, which the negro may accomplish in what our modern reformers term education, would leave still unsettled the question at issue. Negro children go to school, it is true; but they go because the feast is free and the school-house is a shelter from labor. That yearning for knowledge, which is the only test that it will be effectually acquired or usefully employed, is not the motive that takes the negro urchin to school. Should such a motive possibly exist, the system leaves no room for its display or development. By money extorted from capital and labor, negro children are coaxed and petted into the acquisition of the rudiments of learning, into a certain facility in the mere imitative processes of education. From such data the conclusion is reached that the negro is capable of education in the true sense of

the word, and is competent to the loftiest functions of life—the duties of political sovereignty. Not more absurd would the conclusion be that oranges may be profitably grown in Virginia as a staple crop because the seed will germinate in our soil, and the plant, if protected from the rigor of our winters and forced by artificial heat, may be made to bear a scanty crop of imperfect fruit.

3. There is one way, and only one, in which it is possible for the demonstration to be made. Let the negro, in his own way, without help or hindrance from any quarter, make good his claim that he may be safely invested with the rights of citizenship, then, and not till then, will the demonstration be satisfactory and complete. The negro has his destiny in his own hands; he is in a civilized society, with all the arts and appliances of civilization at his command. If he is competent to rise from his present position, and capable of becoming a useful citizen, an integral part of the body politic, no help, no stimulation, is necessary to bring about the result. Indeed, he would rise and make good the demonstration of his capacity and consequently of his rights, not only without assistance, but in the face of hostile legislation. Never had a semi-civilized race so splendid an opportunity of demonstrating their capabilities. So far from not learning, they cannot help learning, if only they have the ability and the desire to learn. To tax our people, already pinched with extreme poverty, to provide for the blacks the means of free education, is simply an attempt to bribe and coax them into learning, and is, in itself, a complete confession of defeat. The soil is so barren that it must be stimulated into temporary and spasmodic productiveness by copious applications of guano obtained from a foreign locality. Withhold the artificial stimulus, and the soil lapses at once into its original infertility.

Now, we tax ourselves to the point of actual suffering, we stretch the power of taxation to the very verge of confiscation, and attain the sacred name of the Commonwealth, to settle a question in sociology, the solution of which is rendered impossible by the new element—unnecessary and deceptive—with which we complicate the problem. That individual negroes may be stimulated by the system into a mechanical familiarity with the elements of education, so-called, no more settles the question of the capacity of the race than the fructification of a tropical plant in a hot-house proves that it can stand the rigors of our climate and may be made to entrench itself permanently and profitably in our soil. But if the negro, moved by his own instincts, stimulated by his own aspirations, make good, in his own way, by his own strength, and at his own expense, his fitness for citizenship, then the question is put beyond cavil, and the doctrine of negro equality is settled affirmatively and forever. If, under the circumstances indicated, he should fail, however, to make good his claim, then it would as clearly appear that he is congenitally an inferior, and that his proper position is menial and subordinate. We are guilty, then, of the supreme folly, of the outrageous wickedness of expending annually vast sums of money,

extorted by unjust taxation from a disheartened and poverty-stricken people, upon the pretended education of negroes, with the view of settling the question of their fitness for citizenship, while this very expenditure in their behalf renders a correct solution of the problem an utter impossibility. On the other hand, without the expenditure of a single dollar, the question would settle itself naturally, and so settled, would lead us to the only safe and wise conclusions.

Let not the reader imagine that I am arguing for the exclusion of the negro from the public schools. Having shown in several articles, before alluded to, that appeared in the *Religious Herald*, that the system is utterly indefensible, even without reference to the question of mixed races; that it is in irreconcilable conflict with the American theory of government and with the Bible doctrine of parental duty and responsibility; that it debauches public and private morality; that unless arrested, it will be the death of liberty, if, indeed, it has not already inflicted the fatal blow, I favor the abandonment of the scheme altogether.

Are the "children of the State" then, says an objector, to be allowed to grow up in ignorance, and by their ignorance imperil the morals, the property and the institutions of the country? To this I answer:

1. That if the education of children be left where God and nature has placed it, in the hands of parents, some will be educated and others will not be. As a general statement, those will be educated who ought to be educated, and those will fail to be educated, or rather will remain untaught in letters, whose education would neither increase their own happiness nor advance the general interests of society. Those, or their parents for them, who have an innate yearning for a loftier and nobler sphere; for the pleasure and the power of real mental development; for the good it will enable them to accomplish, and the influence it will enable them to exert, will not be balked in the accomplishment of their ambition. They will reach their goal through years, it may be, of toil, of hardship, of self-denial; and this very discipline of trial and difficulty will be the most important element of their education; will make them stronger, purer, better. In the education of such, society is profoundly interested; and they will be educated as certainly and far more effectually without the pestiferous and dangerous intervention of government.

But they who have no such longings will, in the main, be left out: and it is better for them and for society that it should be so. Their instincts do not seek, their modes of life will not require, scholastic arts. Their attainments in letters accordingly will range from zero upwards, but never high. Such people must spend their lives in physical labor. Is it hard that it should be so? Very hard, in the estimation of our fanatical optimists, but not so in truth. Such people would be extremely unhappy, and useless as well, if placed upon a plane above their instincts and beyond their capacity. Speculate as we will, a large part, perhaps the larger part, of the human

family is doomed to manual labor. We cannot extricate them from that condition. In it they are happy and content unless disquieted by the false teachings of a mischievous fanaticism. The prime necessities of life, as food and fuel, raiment and shelter, have always demanded, and always will demand, the mechanical labor of half the world. Let it not be imagined that steam or electricity will at length so perform the work of human muscles as to leave all men abundant time for intellectual cultivation. Science suggests no such dreamy vista. The locomotive has but increased the demand for transportation, the spinning jenny for textile fabrics, the sewing machine for excessive embroidery and ornamentation. As the facilities of work are increased, the demands for work will grow proportionately. The wants of society, artificial or necessary, will always multiply as fast as the means of supplying them.

Now, they who do this work cannot be scholars. A man who has followed the plough all day long cannot study when he comes home at night. All his time of rest is demanded to repair the muscular and nervous exhaustion of a day's labor. If, in his early youth, he has made some proficiency in literary arts, they fall into disuse, as a fact, and from necessity, in his toiling manhood. The laboring class will also be a reading class when, and only when, Plato's Utopia is realized. The attempt to lift our whole population, white and black, into a literary atmosphere would be supremely silly, even if we possessed the fabled gift of Midas, whose touch turned every object into gold. The fantastic enterprise, under existing circumstances, when we are unable, or profess to be unable, to pay the interest on our public debt, and to solve the daily recurring problem of food and clothing for our families, is an outrage upon simple honesty and common sense.

Nor can it be successfully maintained that the education is promoted of those even for whose special benefit the public school is intended. Those whose instincts lead them to seek education will be better educated, as already shown, without the costly patronage of the State. But the others, without such instincts, may attend schools; compulsory laws, as in the Northern States, Prussia, and elsewhere, may enforce their attendance; the desire to study, the thirst for knowledge, however, is lacking, and cannot be supplied by legislation. Without this essential condition of success, the whole business is a farce. The feast is spread, but the urchins do not relish it; you may force it into their stomachs, but then it is physic, not food; it cannot be assimilated; it does not strengthen, it weakens, the intellectual organism. The "Pierian Spring," a little turbid, perhaps, bubbles before their eyes; but they are not thirsty, and will not drink. You may force them to swallow draught after draught; but then it is only a disgusting drench, not the living water of intellectual life.

2. To grow up ignorant of letters is not necessarily to grow up in ignorance. I have been all along using the term education with a sort of silent protest. A man is educated, who can observe intelligently, compare and reason, and reach just conclusions, with or

without book-learning. A knowledge of letters is not education, but only a means, and frequently a very imperfect means, of education. That man is educated for his sphere of life, and is happy and useful in that sphere, who well understands and discharges its duties. I daily meet uneducated men, whose knowledge of newspaper and what is called popular literature, is flippant and voluminous. I daily meet educated men, good citizens, and good neighbors, some of whom cannot even read, while others abandon in mature and busy life the scholastic arts acquired in their boyhood.

My next neighbor is a quiet, kindly man, a valuable citizen, an industrious and successful tiller of the soil. If you go to his farm in the busy season, you realize at once, from the steady progress and thorough character of the work, from the absence of all hurry, bluster and confusion, that he is indeed a master workman. I have seen him directing the work of thirty laborers. Some are hauling up wheat, some are threshing, some are fanning, some are ricking the straw, some are putting away the chaff, some are measuring the grain, some are hauling it to market; and all these operations are so ordered that they go on at equal pace; there is no jar, no loss of time. Can such a man, averaging from 25 to 30 bushels of wheat per acre on a large farm, competent to direct this work in such a systematic and judicious way, be justly called an uneducated man? And yet this man never reads, and, I am told, is unable to read. If, indeed, he is uneducated, then I wish we had more of the same sort.

During the late war, Stonewall Jackson came at nightfall to a swollen stream. A supreme necessity required that he should cross it before day. He called his engineers to him and explained the situation. He also sent for a man, who sustained an anomalous relation to the army, and whose sterling worth and strong common sense had frequently attracted the General's notice. "What can you do for me?" said Jackson. "Let me pick a hundred men, and I think I can put you over," said our hero. The detail was granted; and before day he returned to old Stonewall: "Ginral, the bridge ar built; your army can pass over. Your drawin' men will show you their picters in the morning." And yet by the modern test this man, who built the bridge before professional engineers had completed their plans and specifications, was an ignorant man. If, indeed, he was, then the familiar line is true in a sense which the poet never intended:

"When ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

Consider the ancient Athenians. Such was their critical acumen that with ease they followed Socrates in his subtlest disquisitions; such their polished taste that the use of a false quantity by a speaker forced him from the bema; such their quick intelligence that their appreciative plaudits were the highest meed of their orators and the sure passport to fame. And yet these people, innocent, in the main,

of letters, and therefore, according to the modern standard, uneducated, have fairly illumined the track of history with the brightest record of public spirit and of patriotism; have left for the constant study and imitation of succeeding ages the loftiest achievements in poetry and in eloquence, in philosophy and in art; and have infused their spirit as an eternal inspiration, solace and guide, into the language and literature of every civilized people that have since figured in the annals of time.

We are indeed a progressive people! Education, which concerns that incorporeal essence, the mind or soul, we have learned in our day to determine with an accuracy fully equal to that with which a merchant measures his calico or a butcher weighs his beef. Our modern reformers turn to the Federal census, and because they find that the percentage of persons unable to read and write is greater in Virginia than in Connecticut, reach the conclusion by the application of their simple rule, that Connecticut is exactly four and a half times better educated than Virginia. The fact that Virginia has given to the country and to history the purest and ablest patriots and statesmen, the most brilliant and gifted orators, the ablest generals, the noblest displays of generosity and self-abnegation, while the contribution of Connecticut has been little more than painted hams and wooden nutmegs, has no relation at all to the matter of education!

But whether children are to grow up ignorant or not is not a proper question for government. The fact that it is assumed that government may take the whole matter of the education of "the children of the State" into its parental hands most painfully shows how far we have been corrupted from the simplicity of our fathers. Such an idea never entered the minds of such babes in statesmanship as Mason, Monroe, Marshall, Pendleton, Randolph, and so on, but was reserved to illustrate, in our day, the luminous patriotism of Judge Underwood and Doctor Bayne.

According to the American theory, government is not personal or parental, but is a mere agency which we may alter or abolish at pleasure when it fails to accomplish the purposes for which it was instituted. Government is the creature of society, not society the creature of government. The government belongs to the people, not the people to the government. It is the proper function of government to protect the rights of individuals, not to form society.

Now, our government, State or Federal, cannot undertake the education of the people without violating its foundation maxims. If our government can prescribe when our children shall go to school, where, and to whom, what they shall learn and what they shall not learn, it is plain that it can mould to its pleasures the feelings and sentiments of the rising generation. It forms society. A party in power can easily perpetuate its existence. In some of the States, the whole public school machinery has been run avowedly in the interests of the Radical party. Under such a system the voters of the

country are fabricated and fashioned by government. The government is not the reflex of public sentiment, but public sentiment the reflex of government. The opinions of individuals do not form the government, but government the opinions of individuals. This is done confessedly in bepraised Prussia and in other absolute governments. Under such a system, the people may be called voters; but they are tools, pliant tools, ready at a moment's notice to do a tyrant's bidding. No room has been left for the development of individual opinion, as necessary to free government as air is to life; but a generation has been welded by uniform processes into an unthinking mass, not competent to direct, but prompt to obey, the government, which has infused it with its ideas and moulded it to its will.

To support the public school is to abandon the American theory of government. Nor is it calculated to abate our fears when we observe how responsive the States are to the suggestions of the central government, which, not satisfied with pliant servility, is evidently preparing to clutch the whole system and wield its incalculable power in the furtherance of its projects.

Another view will demonstrate that the public school system and the American theory of government cannot exist together. We maintain the perfect separation of Church and State. Absolute religious freedom, we proudly claim, is the gift of American thought to humanity. Here, we assert, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Mahommedans, Infidels, Pagans and Atheists, stand politically on the same footing. All are free to believe or disbelieve what they please, and incur by their belief no disqualification of any sort whatever. A man is responsible only to his Maker for his religious belief, and government cannot tax for the support of any form of religion. Such is our boast, such our creed. But this creed is attacked so soon as the State undertakes to educate. The vexed question of Church and State obtrudes itself, and will not down. Shall religious instruction be given in the public school? If so, then that instruction will offend some, who will maintain, and, according to our political compact, will justly maintain, that they are taxed to propagate religious error. Shall religious instruction be excluded from the public school? If so, then the public school, in the clear opinion of the great bulk of Protestants, is an institution in the interests of Atheism and Infidelity. To exclude the precepts and the doctrines of the Gospel, and its motives and inspirations, from the hungry, plastic minds of children, is, they tell us, to put contempt upon religion and to compel their children to receive hostile, perhaps fatal, impressions. They are taxed that their children may learn to trample under foot the lessons of religion and the blood of the atonement. Whether, therefore, religious instruction be given or excluded, the great American doctrine of absolute religious freedom is violated.

Shall the Bible be read in the public school? If so, what version? If the Catholic version, then Protestants are taxed to sup-

port the doctrine of penance. If King James' version, then the Catholic is taxed to propagate heresy, and the Jew to maintain the pretensions of an imposter. The State cannot prescribe a religious creed; it has covenanted to respect the religious faith of all its citizens alike, and not to inquire into the truth or error of their tenets.

Let the Bible be a sealed book in the public school, demands the Atheist or the Infidel, Let its doctrines and teachings never be announced to furnish motives of conduct to the pupils. Be it so. Then religionists of every class will complain, and justly, that they are taxed to destroy religion and to foster infidelity. The minds of their children are hungry; if truth be excluded, they must feed on error. Those minds are plastic, and must receive impressions. If Religion be forbidden to write its lessons on the soft tablets of their hearts, Vice will brand them with his mark and seal them as his own.

Nor is it possible to divorce religion from secular instruction. There is religion in the copy-book and in the primer, in history, in science, in literature. Every teacher makes impressions for or against religion.

Under such a system, what chance is there of sound, moral culture when a chapter of the Bible can be read only by sufferance; when the only infallible source of ethics must be positively excluded or timidly employed. The mere cultivation of the intellectual powers, without the proper cultivation of the moral faculties, furnishes no safeguard against vice and crime. It enlarges the desires, it is true; but this enlargement is not accompanied by corresponding moral restraints to prevent their unlawful gratification. It only puts into the heart a stronger temptation, and into the hand a keener instrument for crime.

Such has always been the fruit which this tree has borne. It first took root and flourished among the ancient Spartans, and soon their creed was perfidy, and their virtue, theft. In an article in the *Religious Herald*, I proved by the inexorable logic of the census tables that crime and communism are most rife and rampant exactly in those communities where the system has been longest entrenched. The State, in order to prepare our children for the safe and intelligent discharge of the duties of citizenship, must inform their minds and mould their morals! This work, by the voice of Nature and the law of God, belongs to parents, and to them only; and government has never in a single instance usurped the parental function without emasculating, debasing and corrupting the character of its subjects. If this be our reliance for the intelligence and morality necessary to the perpetuity of free institutions, then we are leaning upon a broken reed, we are treading upon treacherous ashes, we are building upon the unstable sand.

But the system, we are told, is upon us by the conqueror's act, and submission is at once our necessity and our policy. To this I answer:

1. That there is no evidence to show that the Federal Government required the incorporation of the free school system into our State Constitution as a condition of reconstruction; and if it did not, the argument is plainly false.

2. But, it is replied, that while the Federal Government did not expressly make this avowal, it was known that such was its pleasure and its purpose, and that the State would not have been re-admitted into the Union unless our Constitution had contained a provision for the support of free schools. This may be true; it may not be true. It is a matter of conjecture. But granting it to be true, I have this to say: Virginia is now a State of this Union. She is as truly a State as Massachusetts, and as sovereign within the limits of State action. Provided she does not violate the Federal Constitution, she is as free as any other State to regulate her internal affairs in her own way. All that the Federal Government had a right to expect, all, in fact, that it did expect, was so to start us in our new career as to make it morally certain that we would move in the path of its appointment. Fastening upon us negro suffrage and the public school, it knew that the difficulty of making a change would be exceedingly great. But if from inherent energy and virtue we surmount the difficulty, the Federal Government will only be baulked in its own game—a game it had no right to play, and certainly will have no right to complain. If good faith to the Federal Government indeed demands the eternal integrity of the present Constitution of Virginia, by what authority, then, is our present Legislature engaged in an attempt to affect important alterations? If Virginia is indeed a State, with all the rights of any other State, then the payment of her debt supremely touches her honor. But, if, as is secretly assumed but not roundly asserted, she is not a real State, but an outlying province; if, by foreign force, a form of organic law is fixed and fastened upon her that prevents the development of her resources and renders compliance with her plighted faith impossible, then it were well that the fact should so appear, and cancel her obligations. If such, indeed, be her condition, then let the Federal Government tear from her shield the sham sovereignty we should in very shame refuse to flaunt. Let the full truth be openly avowed. Sorrow, humiliation and shame have been the fruit, the bitter fruit, of falsehood, pretense and self-deception. If such indeed be the condition of Virginia, then she is dead; dead from the blow, which, with superhuman courage, she vainly essayed to parry. But proclaim her death, and the circumstances of her death, and so save her honor. Yes, it were better to annihilate right out her pretended sovereignty, and so free her fame from the foul stain of violated faith, than that she should live on, but in a moribund state, while dishonor feeds and fattens on her decaying vitals. So dying, her pale ghost, as it descends to the shades, pale from sorrow and from torture, but still pure, will be welcomed to the tender embrace of the bravest of her sons: of him, whose effigy, the gift of kindred blood, was lately inaugurated amidst the loud roar ofartil-

lery and the mournful dirge of martial music; who left, as his last legacy to the Commonwealth he could not save, the immortal words, "Death is preferable to dishonor."

No, no; I cannot admit the conclusion of those who say that the conqueror has left us the form but nothing of the reality of freedom; that he has imposed upon us the responsibilities of sovereignty but denied us the liberty of meeting its demands; that he even consents to the destruction of the government he fought to defend in order to wreak the more fully his malignant vengeance on us. No, no; we can change the Constitution of our State, if we please; we can do this and be guilty of no breach of faith—express, tacit or implied.

3. When the present Constitution of Virginia was adopted, it was simply impossible to do the wise and proper thing. The conqueror, after a hard and doubtful contest, was flushed with victory, hot with wrath, and thirsting for vengeance. Thus inflamed, he did things injurious to both sides, which a returning sense of justice and the mellowing influence of time, lead him to cancel or modify.

On the other hand, Virginia was absolutely paralyzed with despair. She had made the supreme effort and had failed. Bleeding and prostrate, she lay at the conqueror's feet. If at such a time she accepted ruinous and degrading conditions; if, in the hour of her mortal weakness, she went farther (as I think she did) in the way of submission than was required, and, to appease her powerful and vindictive conqueror, assumed burdens which even he in his hot exasperation did not seek to impose, is she now, when she is somewhat recovering from her deadly stupor, and the blood, though slow and languid, is beginning to creep and tingle through her veins, still to suffer, and to suffer forever, the crucifixion of those cruel fetters? Virginia was not even present in the Convention that formed this Constitution. A few, indeed, impotent to restrain, stood by in silent agony and saw their mother mutilated and mangled by aliens and enemies, when there was neither strength in her arm nor mercy in her woe. And yet we are told that a Constitution thus formed, and imposed upon us, is an eternal contract, and that it is wrong even to attempt to free the Commonwealth from its hard and ruinous conditions.

We are trying to inaugurate the "era of good feeling," to "shake hands across the bloody chasm," and be friends again. God speed the happy day! But that day will never come so long as unjust and injurious terms, the heritage of defeat, are submitted to on the one hand, or enforced on the other. We can never feel kindly towards the North so long as we chafe under these cruel exactions; the North can never respect us or extend to us a sincere and honorable friendship so long as with lying lips we profess to love the chains that gall us. The only condition of solid peace, of honest friendship, is that the perfect equality of the States should be felt, asserted and acknowledged. In order to the restoration of fraternal relations, we must make a full, frank and manly assertion of our sentiments. To conceal or qualify them is but to confirm the op-

pression which the advocates of such a policy profess to fear. As time mellows the temper of the North, and the hot passions, born of blood, subside, the generous instincts of the victor, stimulated and strengthened by an ever-growing conviction of identity of interests, and by the sad spectacle of a brave people writhing under dishonorable terms accepted in the weakness of despair or imposed in the cruel wantonness of power, will seek to erase the traces of fratricidal conflict and to blend the late hostile sections into friendly and honorable union again. But this consummation will never be reached so long as we profess to be satisfied with—even to support and defend—the degrading terms of which the conqueror himself is getting to be ashamed. By manly conduct and bearing, by language open, frank, ingenuous, let us maintain our self-respect, and so we will secure respect and consideration from our enemies—enemies no more, at last friends. I offend a powerful friend. My condition is such that an adjustment is necessary. He has me in his power, and imposes conditions which wound my pride and self-respect, but I accept them from necessity. We resume our relations; we maintain the forms of friendship and courtesy; but it is a hollow and a treacherous peace. If I should tell him I was easy and content under the galling terms, he would hold me, and justly, in contempt. I can never feel kindly towards him; he can never restore to me his confidence and respect; we can never be friends again, until by concurrent action the degrading terms are cancelled. The application is easy.

That there is nothing in our relations to the Federal Government to prevent our abandonment of free schools, the friends of the scheme in Virginia have again and again proclaimed. When the Civil Rights Bill, requiring mixed schools—the logical demand, by the way, of the system—was under debate in Congress, they constantly declared that that feature, if retained, would effectually kill the public schools in this and in all the Southern States. There is a way, then, to get rid of this system, even according to its supporters, for the Constitution of Virginia is now exactly what it was then.

But, says an objector, the theory of public instruction so generally prevails, and is still making such rapid headway, that it is idle to resist the current, and that it becomes us to submit as gracefully as possible to the inevitable. I answer as follows:

1. If the system is utterly wrong both in morals and in policy, as I have shown it to be, it is the duty of good men to oppose it, and that without reference to the question of the success or failure of their opposition. In the language of Burke: "When there is abuse there ought to be clamor; for it is better to have our slumber broken by the fire-bell than to perish in bed amidst the flames." It is better for us, it makes us purer and stronger, to encounter defeat in a brave contest for the right than to triumph in the wrong. In fact, a constant contest with evil is the unending duty of humanity. To submit to it, and hence to be corrupted and debauched by it, is

the soft persuasion of the lax morality of our day. I daily meet men who say: "I fully accept your views, but the thing is upon us, and we have only to submit." Of course, the system will prevail, if those who are opposed to will not oppose it. The devil himself is upon us; must we, therefore, cease resistance, and passively submit to his pleasure?

Others say, in terms of confidential cowardice, that, while they utterly disapprove the scheme, yet so many who have votes or patronage are in favor of it, their interests forbid them even to divulge their opinions. But they, upon whom the burdens of government chiefly fall, whose opinions, therefore, are most entitled to consideration, who have never been candidates for office, and never expect to be, with but few exceptions, oppose the scheme. It is fastened upon us by the brute tyranny of numbers, supported by the votes of those who give it no money, and by the money of those who give it no votes.

2. But I am not at all certain that the system is necessarily upon us forever. It is not gaining, but it is evidently losing strength, even in the North. The tree is beginning to bear fruit, and it is not luscious fruit. The great State of New York is in a ferment about the matter. So with some of the Northwestern States. Even in Massachusetts, the machinery has to be continually tinkered and altered. Everywhere it excites discontent and opposition, and causes bad blood. Most men cannot reason except from facts; they must learn only in the school of experience. The facts have not been favorable to the system; the experience has been bitter. The insuperable difficulties that belong to the system, as, for instance, compulsory attendance and religious instruction, display themselves under the test of actual experiment, and threaten it with overthrow. The school fund has in many cases become a fund for corruption, and has been used notoriously in the furtherance of political schemes. The educational system, a part of government, and therefore subject to all the fluctuations and corruptions of government, has in some instances been so saturated with the putrid waters of party politics that parents, unable to reason from principles, instructed at last by facts, stand aghast at the contamination to which their children are subjected. The system is not becoming stronger; it is getting weaker. A reconsideration of the whole matter is the growing demand and tendency of the times.

3. But so far from accepting the opinion so flippantly proclaimed, I know that the system, sooner or later, is doomed to utter overthrow. Founded on false principles of government, false doctrines in morals, its cornerstone injustice, like all other false systems, it will at last tumble down. It is a violation of those eternal principles of God's moral government, as steady and as constant in their action as the laws that control the physical universe. The results of the violation of those principles are as inevitable, though, perhaps, not so patent or so prompt, as those which follow a disregard of physical laws. "The mills of the gods grind slowly," but they grind;

and their perfect work will at length be accomplished. We may obstruct the operation of these principles, as we may obstruct the action of physical laws, but never in either case safely or permanently. They will display at last their invincible power by sweeping away all obstructing causes, and the consequent devastation will be greater in proportion to the strength of the obstructions.

We may arrest for a time the flow of a river to the sea. As the waters come, and fret and foam against the embankment, we may make it higher, broader, stronger; but no obstruction which human power can build will be able finally to withstand the resistless momentum of that ever-swelling flood. And the longer we stay its course, the greater will be the desolating force of that angry tide when at last it has forced its way.

False moral systems, once more popular and more prevalent than the one we have subjected to examination, have in like manner been swept away, and their wrecks bestrew the path of history. "Truth is great, and it will prevail."

But shall we weakly wait until this system has borne its full harvest of evil fruit; until, leaving us no fragment of our distinctive civilization, it has accomplished our social subjugation, without making the supreme effort for its extirpation? If we cannot destroy it, we can certainly so modify it as to strip it of some of its most objectional features. The scheme intended for the benefit of individuals, not for the protection of property, should, if we can do no more, be thrown upon the poll tax solely for support. The most intelligent and worthy friends of the system themselves favor this plan; and with proper effort, the necessary change of the constitution could be easily effected. But there is a remedy, an effectual remedy, if only we have the courage to use it; there is a way out of the wilderness, which will lead us to relief not only from this system, but from other evils also, daily becoming more and more intolerable, the brood of the same hideous parentage.

Universal suffrage, the sum of all political evils, without which the free-school system could not be sustained in Virginia, must give way to qualified suffrage; and the best qualification is a property-qualification. Start not, and say the remedy is impossible; be patient, let us see.

If indeed it be impossible, then we may fold our hands in despair; we are a ruined people, utterly ruined. A government that does not protect property rights, fails to discharge the most obvious and important function of government, and is a monstrous oppression. Universal suffrage puts property under the control of those who own none, and to be able to control property by legislation is in effect to own it. It is the unvarying testimony of all history, and the impregnable conclusion of sound philosophy, that the ratio of increase of non-property-holders is greater than that of property-holders, and this becomes more conspicuous as population becomes more crowded. A time comes in the history of every State when non-property-holders constitute the majority, the large

majority as population becomes dense. Under universal suffrage, the majority, owning no property, control the property in the hands of the minority. They will tax it so as to make it tributary to their interests, increasing the tax more and more for their own benefit, until property yields more revenue to the public than to its nominal owners, and this is practical confiscation. Or, they may demand and enforce actual partition and inaugurate downright communism. The effect, in either case, is the same. When confiscation by either route is reached, revolution, bloodshed and chaos are the results, succeeded by the dead calm of absolute despotism. Universal suffrage is, *ipso facto*, a confiscation of private property. The tendencies of our legislation to such an issue are so painfully patent that I need not stop to point them out.

This result, sooner or later, would be reached; but now, more quickly and with circumstances of aggravated horror by virtue of the alien and baser blood forcibly injected into our political system. We must not criminally shut our eyes to the bitter harvest of woe we are preparing for ourselves and for our children. The discovery of "manhood suffrage" is the fatal achievement of those communities which boast their free schools and superior enlightenment; and whose educational policy, discredited everywhere by its results, is commended to our support. The fundamental error that pervades the northern mind, adopted and defended by Dr. Wayland in his "Elements of Moral Science," and so to some extent prevailing in the southern States (the book having once been largely used as a text in our colleges), is the doctrine that rights are unaffected by condition. In this doctrine "manhood suffrage" had its origin and finds still its support. But the doctrine is as false as it is mischievous. Our rights grow out of our condition. Condition defines and determines our rights. A minor has rights, but other and different rights when he gets to be a man. Savages have rights, but other and different rights when they become civilized. The poor man has rights, sacred rights; but other and different rights when he has acquired property. He has the right to protection for his life, for his business, and in all lawful means of bettering his condition and advancing his happiness. But he has no right to control property that does not belong to him; in other words, he has no right to suffrage.

A property-qualification for suffrage is recommended by the following considerations:

1. It is just. Nothing is plainer than that they who own the property of a country, and must bear well nigh the whole burden of taxation, should control legislation.

2. It is the only politic and safe plan. To acquire property is a much better educational test even than the ability to read and write. Any fool may learn to read and write, but to make a thousand dollars requires much more intelligence, and is a far better test of worth. To own property identifies one with the State, and his intelligence is quickened and stimulated by his interests.

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But, says the demagogue, must a man be required to fight for a country in which he cannot vote? Must he be required to shoulder the musket and not be allowed to cast a ballot? I answer: fighting and voting are very different things. The fact that a man makes a good soldier does not at all touch the question of his fitness as a voter. Fitness to fight and fitness to vote, are not convertible terms.

Why does he fight, and what does he fight for, if he cannot vote? I answer: he fights for the country that protects his life, that protects his business, that protects his hopes and his prospects, and will protect his property when he acquires it. If suffrage be so dear, I answer further, that he fights for the country that will give him suffrage in due time when he will be prepared to exercise the right, now valuable, for the general good, and for the undisturbed possession and enjoyment of the fruits of his honest toil. We have had restricted suffrage in Virginia, and nobody was oppressed or aggrieved, but all were more content and better protected, because the government was in safer and better hands.

We, are told, however, that, universal suffrage having been inaugurated, it is now impossible to recall it. But the privilege has become so worthless and has been attended with such ruinous consequences of the certainty of a still more abundant harvest of sorrow in the future, that thousands are ready to disfranchise themselves if, by so doing, they could restrict suffrage and put it on a safer basis. Let us not be discouraged by the remark, so common, that political powers, when once extended, can never be peaceably revoked. Our condition is utterly exceptional, and history throws no light upon the problem left to us for solution. The conditions are new and abnormal, and we may reach an issue as novel in history as the case itself.

If it were proposed to amend our State Constitution by engrafting upon it a property qualification for suffrage, applicable alike to both races, who would support the amendment? I answer:

1. All, with the rarest exceptions, possessing the required qualification, the class who are most interested in good government, and upon whom its burdens chiefly fall.

2. Thousands upon thousands, who have little or no property, but who have energy, intelligence, the hope and the capacity of acquiring property. They would gladly abandon a polluted and worthless privilege to acquire in due time a valuable right which they would exercise in the protection of their property. With proper effort, the support of almost every voter belonging to this class could be secured for the suggested amendment.

3. But not these two classes only, who own the property, and represent the intelligence, the morality, the energy and enterprise, of the commonwealth. Their influence is necessarily and justly great, and this influence they would properly exert in securing the support or cancelling the opposition of others more or less indifferent.

Opposition to the amendment would come, as a general statement,

almost wholly from that class who are so low that they do not even hope to rise. Its defeat, if defeat must come, would demonstrate that the political power of the State is lodged exactly in those hands least competent to use it. Into this wretched condition has the grand old Commonwealth already come? I do not believe it. But she is approaching that condition with each revolving year. Her rescue is easier now than it will ever be again. The attempt is worthy of our noblest effort, demands our utmost energy. Let the real people boldly demand this change, and bravely attempt to put it through, and success is certain. Let them turn away from the cautious counsels of timid editors, with whom the subscription list outweighs good government and the triumph of truth. Let petty politicians, tempted perhaps, for selfish ends, to head the ignoble opposition, in whose eyes a vote is more important than a principle, be made to understand that in this hour of supreme peril, they must stand aside. Not only life, and property and good government, but our honor and our social status and the very sanctities of the fireside are imperilled. Let us endeavor, if we despair for ourselves, to open a future for our children, and leave to them at least the heritage of hope.

Oh! my countrymen, my countrymen, will you go on in unthinking apathy, and weakly close your eyes to the thickening horrors of the future? If we falter now, when every thing is at stake that makes life dear, then it will appear that we have experienced not only political but social subjugation; that we have neither "freedom in our love, nor in our souls are free."

CIVIS.



