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THE PROBLEM

OF

NEGRO EDUCATION.

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THE PROBLEM OF NEGRO EDUCATION.

OF all the questions which disturb the mental equanimity of the patriotic and thinking citizen of our Republic, none is looming in his horizon with a more lurid and portentous aspect than the black cloud of illiteracy which is rapidly spreading over the country, and especially resting upon the Southern States of the Union. Compared with it as an element of vital danger to the Republic, Mormonism, communism, and socialism, sink into obscurity.

In spite of all public and private effort, and "all the appliances of education, the increase of illiterate voters in the South from 1870 to 1880 was 187,671," and, adds President Hayes, "In more than one third of the Union the ignorant voters are almost one third of the total number of voters."

The great factor in this illiteracy of the South is the negro. By the proclamation of President Lincoln in 1863 upwards of four millions of slaves were suddenly made free, and shortly after nearly one million were clothed with the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of American citizenship. With no correct notions of morals or religion, no accurate conception of the positive duties arising from citizenship, improvident and ignorant, the race was, and still is, entirely unprepared for the responsible duties of freemen; and, naturally, when called upon to govern, or to hold offices of trust, it has signally failed. The negro is not to blame for this, and is not blamed; his misfortune is understood, and by those who knew him best his failure was foreseen. The only way out of the unfortunate dilemma, or of ameliorating the condition in which the country is placed by the thrusting upon it of this mass of ignorance, is by education: an education both mental and moral.

But here we are confronted by the great and all-important question: How shall the education of the negro be accomplished? By the States most directly interested, alone and unassisted? This, for various reasons, is at present impossible. By the usual philanthropic efforts and methods of our religious societies? They are entirely inadequate. Shall we depend upon the individual munificence of the Peabodys, the Tulanos, and Slaters? Their princely gifts are but drops in the great ocean of our needs. Shall we demand that the government which thrust this heavy burden of ignorant suf-

frage upon the States without their consent, or any possible legal preparation for it, shall come to their assistance, "believing that the power to do this is co-ordinate with the power that enfranchised the Negro"? Yes! and it is the object of this paper to show, as briefly as possible, the absolute and imperative necessity which exists for such action.

The great difficulty which meets us at the outset in this inquiry is the prevailing misconception at the North of what the Southern negro really is. What sort of a person *is* this colored freeman of the South, who, by his physical capacity, contributes so much to the material prosperity of that fertile region?

He is a child in intellect, in education, in dependence, in simplicity; an animal in licentiousness and inherited barbarism. I refer to the great majority known as "plantation negroes," or "field-hands," and not to the active, intelligent, and smartly clothed mulatto, with one half or three quarters admixture of white blood in his veins, who serves at our tables, caters for our evening parties, blacks our boots, and performs hundreds of menial services; nor, even to the pure-blooded negro, found in the centres of population North, as well as South, who has been rounded off and polished by the attrition of large cities; both being entirely different specimens of the *genus homo* from their illiterate, simple, unsophisticated foster-brothers.

Yet it is from this class of city-reared negroes, which, in the largest cities of Georgia, Massachusetts, Alabama, Connecticut, South Carolina, New York, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Texas, Iowa, Mississippi, Ohio, Florida, and Louisiana, together, numbers but one hundred and seventy-eight thousand of the total negro population of six and one-half millions, and from such shining marks as a Douglass or Smith, a Wormley or Revels, a Lynch or Downing, that we form our opinion of the Southern negro, pure and simple; and from this false standpoint are ready to originate educational methods which have little practical utility, and to criticise and condemn the methods and shortcomings of others, who have less wealth, but a superior and intimate knowledge of his needs and of his environment. None but a charlatan would presume to prescribe for a distant and unknown patient in the absence of an accurate diagnosis; and it is a great and prevailing mistake to suppose that the negro is as easily understood, and as readily classified, as an ordinary specimen in an anatomical museum. Exact knowledge of him cannot be acquired by the tourist traveler in a flying winter trip to the South, nor, indeed, in a six months' or six years' residence there; on the contrary, nothing but an experience gained by constant intercourse in

the field, workshop, and household, can furnish the proper data for a correct opinion of his status. A gentleman, who has given much study to the negro character, declares that even "we who have lived our whole lives among them are strangers to their inner life. Yet those whose opportunities bear no comparison to ours have more confidence in their opinion than we have, knowing, as we do by experience, the wide difference which interferes with our mutual understanding." Unfortunately for ourselves and the negro, we at the North have formed our estimate of him as a social element from certain preconceived and indistinct notions, rather than from experience and well-established facts; and it is now necessary to bring to the examination of this problem an honest desire for a better, a more accurate and just knowledge of the present condition, value, and capabilities of the race now endowed with the highest honors and privileges of American citizenship, in order to determine the best methods to be employed in lifting the dark cloud of ignorance and semi-barbarism which surrounds and oppresses it.

In attempting any analysis of the negro character, it must be borne in mind that we are dealing with a race in the very infancy of its development; a race which, within its own ranks, has, with rare exceptions, no illustrations before its eyes, and no high standards of mental and moral comparison; and it is manifestly unjust to condemn it for its shortcomings from the standpoint of a race which has behind it a civilization, the outcome of centuries of continuous progress. In the peculiar circumstances in which the two races are now placed, being equal before the law, but in other respects unequal, we are in danger, in making any honest attempt to state the facts, of the accusation of unfairness, of prejudice, of partisanship, and of making a one-sided statement; but, unfortunately, the danger cannot be avoided and must be faced. If it be true that we are dealing with a race in the infancy of its development, a proposition which will even be admitted by the most intelligent of the negroes, it will then go without saying, that the negro is morally deficient, as his religion is deficient, in any true comprehension of Christian teachings. He has little active sense of virtue or vice as such, or as principles of action; and, when tempted, is more likely to consider the immediate personal consequences of his action than the, to him, less important question of right and wrong. His moral sense is so feeble that he frequently fails utterly to properly estimate the enormity or the degradation of crime; and it is not an unheard-of occurrence, even among the city negroes, for the return of a convict from the penitentiary to

be made an occasion for a ball or evening party in his honor. Among them the conjugal tie is exceedingly weak, and conjugal fidelity is, if not generally, very frequently, disregarded; sensuality is the besetting sin in both sexes. "You would draw back in horror," writes a Northern woman who has resided six years in Alabama, "to see young, unmarried girls, one after another, becoming mothers, and the disgrace of it wearing away before the child is weaned. You would think the state of society almost hopeless where women with families belong not to *one* husband, and manifest no shame; and where even church members seem never to have heard of the seventh commandment." In fact, marriage has little restraint upon the negro; on a slight provocation he divorces himself, without the aid of courts, abandons wife and children, and seeks another family relation in a distant county or neighboring State, defying identification; recalling the assertion of Sir John Lubbock, that the lowest races have no institution of marriage; that true love is almost unknown among them, and marriage in its lowest phases is by no means a matter of affection and companionship. As the planter and the negro are now equal before the law, the former considers himself absolved from all consideration or supervision of the mental, moral, or physical condition of his laborer; and, as a consequence, the negro, when left to himself, and free from all restraining influences, without education or established principles, inherent or acquired, is in many localities in a deplorable situation. On some plantations we have visited, adultery, bigamy, and all manner of lewdness exist to a frightful extent, without remonstrance from the proprietor. We were present at one time on a plantation in the centre of the blackest county in Georgia, where a negro committed rape on the person of a young girl, the daughter of a fellow-laborer, and compounded for the crime by the payment of ten dollars to the father. In his treatment of children, his character presents a singular anomaly. To his own, he is inclined to be harsh, overbearing, and frequently a hard taskmaster; to those of the whites placed in his care, he is kind, tender, attentive, and devoted. It is needless to say that this feature of his character has met with its proper recognition; and without a personal observation of the love and affection which the Southern people have for their old nurses and house-servants, it is impossible for us to fully comprehend it. There are many instances of which we personally know, where separate establishments and comfortable homes are provided for the declining years of these incapacitated servants, as a reward for faithful service, and from a sense of pleasurable duty, and in which they are cared for

and supported with tenderness and solicitude until life's fitful journey is ended. We also know of heads of families, who, since the war and its train of misfortune, have deprived their own children of expensive necessaries and luxuries, in order to bestow them on some faithful old servant; and there are many other instances in which the loss of fortune, and consequent poverty, are mutually and inseparably borne by master, mistress, and servant alike: literally "bearing one another's burdens." And it is to the credit of the negro that during the war, when distress, misfortune, and want were everywhere felt, where kindness had been shown to him, it was usually reciprocated; and he was able in many ways — ways which perhaps may have been in some instances questionable and impossible to his master or mistress — to relieve distress, to furnish comfort, and supply their physical wants. Resentment and revenge are not characteristic of the negro race; unlike the Indian, he does not, as a rule, nurse and harbor his revenge and malice, and, when suddenly aroused, if they are not at once gratified, they soon pass away. It is under sudden impulse, stimulated by drink, and seldom as a deliberate and planned act, that he takes the life of a fellow. Growing out of habits acquired in slavery, where he fancied there was somehow a community of property, a joint ownership with his master, especially in the product of his own labor, he has in small things no keen perception of *meum et tuum;* and it is still hard to induce him to believe that the taking of small quantities or things, especially when the owner has an abundance, is a sin. It is the essence of communism, the consequence of a practice, which, rarely discovered, was as rarely punished, or, when discovered, was allowed to pass as of trifling importance, without any regard for its ultimate moral result.

In the six years' experience of my family in the South, the only instances of any important theft were those of a negro neighbor, who was caught in the act of stealing a wagon-load of corn from a distant storehouse on the plantation, at midnight; the trifling theft of some wood-chopping tools by a negro preacher who, on its discovery, was pursued by the superintendent with a writ; its withdrawal being refused on a promise of the restoration of the tools, he set a house-barn on fire in retaliation, and was arrested on the Saturday before his appointment to preach in a neighboring church; and, finally, that of a church deacon who was detected in hauling a load of "light wood" from the plantation at night. These are the most serious offences; but petty larceny is a chronic difficulty, and an every-day occurrence on the plantation. It is a singular fact, however, that house-

breaking and similar crimes which demand great adroitness and personal courage are very rare among negroes. As to their preachers, a class which includes deacons and elders, it is a common remark with them that their preachers are their worst men; literally stealing "the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in." "The definition of man as a religious animal is profoundly true," remarks Mons. Louis Pauliat; and some system of faith and worship, intensely emotional and superstitious, seems almost a necessity to the negro; and, remarks a distinguished Irish Presbyterian divine long resident in the South, "many of the sentimentally religious do seem to have some conception of their relation to the Deity; but there is a vast amount of the fetichism of their ancestors in Africa and of modern paganism about them, and in the duties of practical religion they are very deficient." Unfortunately, the negro has thus far developed a simple, emotional, religious instinct which does not teach him to do right or to avoid wrong, to love virtue or to hate vice, which are the essence of all true religions.

Sir John Lubbock asserts that "the so-called religion of the lower races bears somewhat the same relation to religion in its higher forms that astrology does to astronomy, or alchemy to chemistry: astronomy is derived from astrology, yet their spirit is in entire opposition; and we shall find the same difference between the religions of the backward and of advanced races."

The plantation negro is also a firm believer in sorcery, enchantments, charms, and the ordinary practices of witchcraft; his not infrequent respect, and even veneration, for the monkey indicates his belief in his kinship. We remember one instance of a learned negro blacksmith, whom we found sitting on his anvil pondering over a volume of Josephus, who positively affirmed his faith in his descent from that interesting animal; a fact which would have given Mr. Darwin an additional gratification. The negro's usual "worship" consists of vehement, impassioned, ecstatic prayer, earnest, even violent exhortation, and profuse psalm-singing, frequently absurdly improvised, the whole often culminating in a festival known as the "Holy Dance" or "Walk in Egypt," that vividly recalls, and no doubt is, the lineal descendant of the wild, ecstatic dances of his barbaric ancestors in the Soudan and on the coast of Guinea.

This "Holy Dance" is now in some of their churches forbidden, but such is its hold upon the negro, thirsting for variety and excitement, which in his isolation he can obtain in no other way, that it still remains, and publicly, or in secret, is incorporated in his emotional services to his great

delight. Nor is this so strange; for in the religious services of the most advanced races there can still be traced the ancient pagan rites of Baal and Thor. Mr. Gordon Cumming remarks of the Celts and Norsemen: "The new Christian faith retained so many of the practices of old paganism that at times it was hard to tell which claimed the upper hand; and the people have been well described as generally Christian in time of peace, but certain always to invoke the aid of Thor when sailing on any dangerous voyage."

The negro's faith is somewhat in this condition of development, and it is possible, probable even, that, with the aid of competent teachers, and the great advantage of his environment, he will evolve out of his hereditary superstition and barbarism a genuine religious faith. At present, his mental horizon is bounded by the advent of his ancestors to this land of promise from the paganism and fetichism of Central Africa, a time which is not yet beyond the memory of some now living, who can tell the story of their capture and the horrors of a middle passage. It is too much to expect from him, or to claim for him, an equality with an advanced race in mental, moral, or religious culture. As the social character of the negro does not especially enter into our inquiry as to the necessity for and the scope of his education, we shall pass it by, remarking only its more prominent features. With no inherited habits or love of labor, no positive influences in the climate or in his surroundings impelling him to it, excepting to supply his actual physical wants, he is seldom restless because he is idle, and rarely seeks work to relieve the tedium of the absence of a regular occupation; his preference is for the irregular and indolent habits of the aborigines. Compelled to labor, he does so cheerfully, if indifferently, and, under proper surveillance, with his physical ability to withstand exposure to the sun, miasma, and fever, and to work without exhaustion, he is altogether the best laborer that can be had, and is to the South invaluable. As to his personal wants, and the wants of his family, he is improvident; in a degree the consequence, no doubt, of his inheritance of slavery.

A good deal has been said of the great desire of the negro for the education of his children. There is no doubt of the existence of this desire, especially among the city negroes; but, unfortunately for themselves and the country, it will not bear analysis, and if critically examined will be found to be indefinite, based on a love of display and novelty, and on an ambition to read and write like the whites, rather than on any love for, or understanding of, the benefits to be derived from the acquisition of knowledge; a fact not at all

surprising, but if any proof of it is required, it can be found in the State of Georgia, where the poll-tax is devoted to public education. The minority cannot afford to pay it, if they so desired; the majority do not want to pay it, and will not devote to it any part of their wages now spent by the males in tobacco, spirits, and gambling, or by the females in highly colored hats, parasols, high-heeled shoes, and candies. On one plantation visited, where a large number of hands, male and female, were employed, the amount spent monthly for tobacco and foolish luxuries, by both sexes, was thirty-five per cent. of the total amount of the wages earned. A very limited exercise of self-denial would enable every negro laborer to pay his poll-tax, which in the State of Georgia is devoted to education; but now, when paid at all, it is more frequently paid by the opposing candidates at the polls. Richmond County, in that State, is one of the foremost in her devotion to public education. A gentleman, thoroughly informed in the details of this matter through his official position, wrote in response to our inquiries in February, 1880: "I doubt if a hundred negroes in the county have paid their tax during the past year; two years ago the board of education, to which the poll-tax reverts, made a show of challenging votes at the polls. The result was that the opposing candidates paid the taxes for the polls."

The average negro then, from a vain ambition, desires education, but he has little desire to pay or make any sacrifice for it.

As a natural outcome of his crude training and development, he prefers to be dependent, and is dependent; and what is true of Georgia is undoubtedly true of the other cotton States. As to the capacity of the negro in acquiring knowledge, the young are frequently precocious, in some instances remarkably so, and learn the elementary studies as quickly as the white children, and, indeed, frequently excel them in those exercising the memory alone; but, as a rule, the negro has a better memory than reasoning faculty, and, consequently, in the higher branches he is soon outstripped.

This fact may in part account for the usual loss of ambition and desire for higher education as he grows in his teens; but a far more potent cause is the hard necessity of his lot, which demands his labor, and under the most favorable circumstances the colored children are rarely found pursuing their studies far into boyhood or girlhood.

This is a phase of the negro educational problem that is frequently overlooked: namely, that the desire of the negro for education, for himself or for his children, whether based on his vanity or on his appreciation of its advantages, cannot always be gratified for want of opportunity, or for want of

means, by reason of his poverty; and in very many instances for the latter cause, a majority even, in some counties, he cannot afford to accept it as a free gift. There are good reasons for this state of poverty, some of which have already been suggested, and although the plantation hand realizes in money, or its just equivalent, several dollars per annum more for his labor than his white brother of the North, and besides this has a climatic advantage in food and clothing which the Northern laborer cannot overcome, yet his improvidence, extravagance, and general want of thriftiness, keep him in continuous poverty.

It is the general belief at the North that the chief cause of the gross ignorance of the great majority of the negro population is the want of schools, and that, to dispel the cloud of illiteracy, it is only necessary to establish them to find them besieged by the entire school population clamoring for instruction. On a more familiar acquaintance with the subject it will be found that the schoolhouse is only the first step in the solution of the problem, and that, owing to the want of appreciation of the value of education, and other causes already suggested, equally influencing the blacks and the poor whites, it will be eventually necessary, in order to fill them when provided, so as to have any appreciable effect upon the illiteracy of the country, to have recourse to compulsory educational laws which will of necessity stimulate the parents in forming more thrifty habits. It may, however, be reasonably doubted if any of the illiterate States are prepared at present for such radical measures.

As an element in politics, the negro has as yet little distinctive character, unless solidified upon the color line, or some class question; neither has he any rank as an element of progress and higher development. As a citizen he has few positive qualities, and his negative qualifications are easily summed up. He neither reads nor writes. He is immoral. He reasons imperfectly. He remembers confusedly. He has no power of analysis. He is gregarious with his own race. He is easily influenced, and has little of what is called common sense.

It is true that in all these particulars he may not differ greatly from the ignorant white voter of the North, with whom, as a part of the great "floating vote" of the country he has much in common. Contrary to the expectations and theories of the keenest observers, tha negro is, since the abolition of slavery, an important factor in the increase of population, notwithstanding the deterioration in the character of his shelter, clothing, food, and physical and sanitary conditions. The following table of States, arranged from the compendium of the last census, will illustrate this remarkable fact: —

PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE.

Georgia	30.2	Massachusetts	22.3
Alabama	26.6	Connecticut	15.8
South Carolina	41.0	New York	15.9
North Carolina	30.6	New Hampshire	9.0
Mississippi	36.6	Ohio	19.9
Florida	43.5	Illinois	21.1
Louisiana	29.3	Pennsylvania	21.6

It will be found that the average gain in population in ten years in these Southern States is 34, while the gain in the Northern States named is but 17.9. The small gain of the State of New York is especially noticeable, as it has the largest foreign-born population of any of the States, and is, by the records kept at Castle Garden, the State most directly benefited by the foreign immigration, having received, of the 390,400, the total for the last year, the large proportion of 146,637 aliens. A study of the census tables will then not only reveal the negro's great reproductive capacity, but also his increasing importance as a political factor.

In this hasty and imperfect sketch of the negro character we have made an honest endeavor to "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." We have attempted to portray something of the character of the "field-hands," — the great majority of the Southern negroes, — without dwelling upon the attainments of the better-educated class that inhabits the large centres of population throughout the country. In the latter class may be found men of unusual ability, of education and morals creditable to any race or civilization; and in both classes pious and godly men and women, good husbands, devoted wives, fond, loving, and careful parents, devoted and sacrificing friends, honest and upright citizens.

If, however, it is not already sufficiently evident that the great majority is mentally and morally ignorant, we can again summon the census returns, which show that, of the whole colored population of the country of ten years and upwards, seventy per cent. cannot write. Of the whole population of Georgia, white and black, above ten years of age, 42.8 per cent. cannot read; of Alabama, 43.5; of South Carolina, 48.2; of North Carolina, 38.3; of Texas, 24.1; of Mississippi, 41.9; of Florida, 38; of Louisiana, 45.8; of Virginia, 34. And it will be observed that in all the States illiteracy exists to a greater or less extent in direct ratio with the negro population. Again we find that of the entire colored population of Georgia of the same ages, 81.6 per cent. are unable to write; of Alabama, 80.6; of South Carolina, 78.5; of North Carolina, 77.4; of Texas, 75.4; of Mississippi, 75.2; of Florida, 70.7; of Louisiana, 79.1; of Virginia, 73.7. In

evidence of the moral degradation of this illiterate class, the returns of the white and colored prisoners in the several States named below, show the great preponderance of the colored prisoners over the white, in excess of the ratio of the black to the white population: —

STATES.	White Population.	Black Population.	White Prisoners.	Black Prisoners.
Alabama	662,185	600,103	221	1,177
Georgia	816,906	725,133	231	1,606
Florida	142,605	126,690	42	233
Louisiana	454,954	483,655	230	847
Mississippi	479,398	650,291	153	1,176
North Carolina	867,242	531,277	601	1,018
South Carolina	391,105	604,332	56	586
Texas	1,197,237	393,348	1,579	1,574
Virginia	880,858	631,616	350	1,204

This preponderance is conspicuously shown in the States of Alabama and Georgia, where the white and black populations are nearly equal. In the former State the black prisoners outnumber the whites five to one, in the latter seven to one. In South Carolina, where there is a black majority of 213,227, or sixty-five per cent., there is an excess of black prisoners over white of ten hundred and forty-six per cent. In Texas, where the whites outnumber the blacks, in round numbers, eight hundred thousand, the number of prisoners is equal.

This illiteracy and immorality being shown, we are to consider our responsibility as States, and as individuals. Under ordinary circumstances the burden of educating its illiterate population should fall upon the state and local governments where hitherto it has always rested; but in the present financial condition of the States directly interested, they are unable at once to meet the imperative necessity which is pressing upon them for instant action. The disposition generally is not wanting, but the means are; and in the hurry and anxiety incident to getting a living, and in replacing the old, or building up new, fortunes, the social and moral condition of a dependent race has been neglected, and, as a result, they mutually suffer.

Again, without any retrospective examination of the causes of this ignorance with the purpose of fixing the culpability of the slave system, the fact still remains that never in our history, or in the experience of any citizen of the country who may now be ready to demur to this plea for government aid in education, has such a mass of festering ignorance been thrust upon a people without warning, with-

out their assent, and without reason; never has such a work of true Christian charity been demanded of a people so entirely unprepared to meet it, through the losses and devastation of a long war. While it is true that the greatest sufferers from it are to be the States in which it exists, it is equally true that it is a mental and moral leprosy, which, if allowed to increase, will eventually devitalize the Republic; and it is a too narrow and selfish view for any patriotic citizen to take in a vital question which affects the very perpetuity of our government to declare that, "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be," without lifting his hand in an attempt to avert the disaster, or to relieve his country of its burden.

We are accustomed to see in our Northern press much vituperation and abuse poured out upon the Southern States for their apparent negligence of, and indifference to, negro education; and to hear much invidious verbal comment upon the fact that the Southern States do not make the same liberal appropriations for educational purposes as do the Northern States. We read, for instance, in a leading New England journal that "nine millions of citizens in New York and New England raise more than twice the amount for school purposes that is raised by sixteen million Southerners," without reference to the nearly tenfold greater ability of the nine to pay it. We are no apologists for the South: in this matter, fortunately, no apology is required; but our common sense of justice is ready to admit the axiom that a stream cannot rise higher than its source, and also that a population cannot be taxed beyond its means, and continue prosperous. To answer any doubts or queries as to what burden of taxation the illiterate States are at present carrying, in comparison with some of the wealthier literate States, we subjoin the table on the following page showing the percentage of the total taxation to the total valuation in the several States named, as compiled from the compendium of the tenth census.

It will be seen that the poor State of Louisiana with her one hundred and sixty millions of property is more heavily taxed than the great State of New York with its twenty-six hundred millions; that my own State of Massachusetts, which spends so liberally for education, pays but one fifth of one per cent. more tax than her sister State of Georgia, and but one sixth of one per cent. more than South Carolina, the most illiterate of all the States. That the four literate States of New England, namely, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Maine, actually pay a less average rate of tax (1.77) on their valuation than South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana (1.78), the four most

States.	Valuation.	Tax.	Per Cent.
Georgia	$239,472,599	$3,207,008	1.33
Massachusetts	1,584,756,802	24,326,877	1.53
Alabama	122,867,228	2,061,978	1.68
Connecticut	327,177,385	5,365,739	1.64
South Carolina	133,560,135	1,839,983	1.38
New York	2,651,940,006	56,392,975	2.12
North Carolina	156,100,202	1,916,132	1.22
New Hampshire	164,755,181	2,697,640	1.63
Texas	320,364,515	4,568,716	1.42
Iowa	398,671,251	11,061,605	2.77
Mississippi	110,628,129	2,384,475	2.15
Ohio	1,534,360,508	25,756,658	1.68
Florida	30,938,309	605,180	1.95
Illinois	786,616,394	24,586,018	3.12
Louisiana	160,162,439	4,395,876	2.74
Pennsylvania	1,683,459,016	28,604,334	1.69
Arkansas	86,409,364	1,839,090	2.12
Maine	235,978,716	5,182,135	2.19
Virginia	308,455,135	4,642,202	1.50

illiterate of the whole country. It will also be found that these nine literate States named in the table pay an average tax of but one quarter of one per cent. more (.27) than the nine most illiterate of the country.

While, then, it may be true that the Southern States as a whole do not make the same liberal appropriations for educational purposes as do their Northern sisters, it is equally true that they cannot afford it; and that they cannot in justice be called upon, by any argument based upon equal ability or unequal or inadequate taxation, to charitably educate a race which will not, or cannot, educate itself. As an evidence of the willingness of one State to do what it can, Dr. Harrison makes the creditable statement that the State of Georgia is at present assessed for school purposes one mill and nine-tenths, while the State of New York is assessed only one mill and five-tenths.

The necessity for increased expenditure for educational purposes in the illiterate States will hardly be denied by any citizen of the North or South, but, to emphasize it more clearly, and to show the present entire inadequacy of the school accommodation for the school population in those States, we quote from the census the returns of the school populations and school sittings in some of the literate and illiterate States, placed in juxtaposition: —

States.	Population of School age, 5 to 17 inclusive.	School Sittings.	Percentage of School Sittings to School population.
Georgia	513,000	221,148	43
Massachusetts	428,000	319,749	75
Alabama	421,000	145,222	34
Connecticut	156,000	110,942	71
South Carolina	331,000	120,918	36
New York	1,338,000	763,817	57
North Carolina	452,000	209,233	46
New Hampshire	79,000	81,131	103
Iowa	510,000	429,202	84
Mississippi	386,000	188,303	49
Ohio	951,000	676,664	71
Florida	88,000	43,048	49
Illinois	944,000	694,106	73
Louisiana	300,000	72,499	24

It will be seen that of the illiterate States, Louisiana has the least school accommodation, twenty-four seats to each one hundred scholars, and of those of high rank in literacy New Hampshire and Iowa have the greatest, one hundred and three, and eighty-four seats to each one hundred respectively.

In the generally adverse criticism of the Southern States as to their negligence in this matter, an important factor that should enter into any honest consideration of it, and which is frequently overlooked, is the sparseness of the population in all these illiterate States, that renders the support of schools often extremely difficult, expensive, and, with their available means, impossible. This fact will be better understood by comparing the present density of the population of the States already named to the square mile: —

Georgia	26.1	Massachusetts	221.8
Alabama	24.5	Connecticut	128.5
South Carolina	33.0	New York	106.7
North Carolina	28.8	New Hampshire	38.5
Texas	6.1	Iowa	29.3
Mississippi	24.4	Ohio	78.5
Florida	5.0	Illinois	55.0
Louisiana	20.7	Pennsylvania	95.2

We will not dwell upon the importance of this factor, or the light which it throws upon the general subject. Still another fact which demands our consideration is the great preponderance of the ignorant negro in hundreds of the counties of these illiterate States, in which he outnumbers the whites in various proportions; where the land is poor, and the people are poorer, and where standing before the law

in the full dignity of citizenship, the equal of his white neighbors, he is incompetent and entirely unprepared, through poverty or disinclination, to accept its trusts or to discharge its responsibilities. The burden of education is thus thrown upon the intelligent white and black minorities, which, however much they may need and desire it, have not the means to bear it, and it is either entirely neglected or maintained for a few months in the year only. A glance at the county populations of these States will illustrate this fact and bring it into its proper prominence.

States.	Number of Counties.	Number of Counties having Negro majorities.	Greatest Negro majority in any one County.
Georgia	137	67	15,000
Alabama	66	24	32,000
South Carolina	33	25	41,000
North Carolina	94	20	12,000
Mississippi	74	39	21,000
Florida	41	9	14,000
Louisiana	59	37	15,000

It is then safe to assume that generally throughout these States which are all illiterate, the school and poll-taxes as at present assessed and collected, and which are only sufficient, from neglect and want of interest and poverty of the majority, to furnish schools from one and a half to three months in the year, bear much more hardly upon the minority, white and black, that desires schools and is willing to pay for them, than they do upon the citizens of the wealthier and more literate States. From this table a distinct idea can also be formed of the present difficulty of maintaining schools in those counties where the negro population is so excessive, especially in those States in which the payment of the poll-tax is not compulsory.

It hardly becomes us, then, with our vastly superior wealth, our greater density, our older civilization, our superior habits, our greater homogeneity of population, to censure those who have not been blessed with a prosperity so continuous and universal. There is a political significance in these data which cannot be passed by. Without education there can be no perfect society, nor any government of true law, nor any protection to legitimate liberty. "Every uneducated voter is a blind ruler; a king on a throne of vast power, without knowledge of his position, or comprehension of its responsibilities, and it is to the existence of this great body of ignorant, irresponsible, and unqualified voters in the

Southern States that the frequent political disturbances are owing; these disagreements, no doubt, often result from the honest, if illegitimate, attempts of the educated minority to protect its social institutions from the aggression of an ignorant and inferior majority." The ignorant voter, white or black, wields a positive influence upon a well-organized society, in all its relations of vast proportions. "If it depended on their votes," writes a Southern gentleman of keen observation, "and if recent elections can be taken as examples, the ablest statesman in the land could be defeated by any demagogue who had the money." To the capitalist, also, the ignorant vote is especially dangerous; it can repudiate the national, the state, the city, and county debts, and the most sacred obligations of civilized society, at the command of political adventurers, without compunction or remorse. The sophistic and captivating argument, "You had no part in creating this debt, why should you be called upon to assist in its payment?" addressed to the negroes by political demagogues in a recent election in Virginia is capable of a much wider application, and its dangerous and destructive tendency may be conceded when the fact is considered that a large number of the towns of the South having populations exceeding four thousand have negro majorities. Georgia has six such towns, with negro majorities in three; Alabama four, with black majorities in three; South Carolina three, with black majorities in two; North Carolina four, with black majorities in two; Mississippi four, with black majorities in two; Louisiana three, with black majorities in two; in addition to the majorities in smaller towns and the large county majorities as already stated.

In recapitulation, we have attempted to show: —

First, The moral and social degradation, the illiteracy, and the improvidence, of the negro.

Second, The indefiniteness of his desire for education, and its frequently false basis. His unwillingness to make any personal sacrifice for it. His poverty, which frequently compels him to neglect it, when obtainable. His deficiency in the love for, or proper understanding of, the usefulness of knowledge.

Third, His present dangerous political character, and his preponderance in many towns and counties in the South.

Fourth, The poverty of the illiterate cotton States compared with the literate Northern States.

Fifth, The present equality of taxation in the literate and illiterate States. The sparseness of population in the latter, which renders the support of schools difficult and expensive. The unreasonableness of the demand made upon them for

the immediate education of the negro, a demand which, in their present condition, it is impossible to satisfy.

Sixth, The danger in the present illiteracy, both white and black, to public morals, to good government, to society, to public trusts and obligations, and even to the vitality of our Republic.

Having thus imperfectly and hastily sketched the character and necessities of the negro in the South, and endeavored to show the utter inability of the illiterate States at present to cope with the problem thrust upon them for solution, some consideration of the methods of negro education and suggestions of relief from the burden of its support will be demanded.

As has already been suggested, our preconceived and erroneous notions of the character of the great majority of the Southern negroes has heretofore affected, and is likely in the future to seriously affect, the practical value of our educational work among them. The accepted theory is that the white and black boy are mentally and morally equal, and, being equal, should be subjected to precisely the same methods, ignoring entirely the history of the races, and denyiog to the former any advantage in inherited ideas, in mind, in morals or religion, slowly gathered in the experience of centuries, and equally ignoring in the latter any consideration of his environment, of his feeble moral sense, his poverty, or his improvidence, and the entire absence of any home influences, or family culture, or inherited habits.

Without claiming any practical knowledge in educational matters, it appears to us that the present methods of common school education are, for the great majority of the negro population, unsatisfactory, because incomplete, by reason of the neglect of the education of the moral sense.

To secure the best results, the mental and moral educational work must be co-ordinate, in order to supply as far as possible the want of good home influences and proper religious training. This is as important to the "poor whites" as to the poor negro. It is important to keep in mind that the illiterate States where the negro population is in excess are as completely missionary fields as are the banks of the Congo, the region of the Nyanza, or the deadly shores of Liberia, and when this fact is thoroughly comprehended, our educational methods will be more successful, because more simple and practical.

With the adult generation, little can be done; our only hope is in the young and rising generation, with whom the work should be begun, *de novo*, by missionary teachers established in every village and hamlet. This work to be supplemented by industrial schools for boys and girls, established in every county, displacing the high schools where

they exist; an institution entirely unnecessary in their present condition, and to the majority even hurtful. If such higher education is desired, its expense should be borne by the extremely small minority which will demand it.

It is not long since that an elaborate scheme was presented to the convention of the Protestant Episcopal church, which proposed the establishment in the South of nearly all the institutions, moral, social, and charitable, known to our highest civilization. The negro is already sufficiently dependent, and such elaborate institutions are likely to increase his dependence. His greatest needs are to be taught self-reliance, providence, self-support, his duty to his neighbor, and how to live a decent, honest, honorable life, which can be essayed or accomplished without the aid or great expense of palatial buildings and the elaborate machinery of great charitable institutions to which he is entirely unaccustomed, and which would seriously interfere with his wonted freedom from restraint. His most efficient teacher will be the example of an upright Christian life, and by that life he will learn that "human happiness has no perfect security but freedom, freedom none but virtue, virtue none but knowledge, and neither freedom, virtue, nor knowledge has any vigor or immortal hope except in the principles of the Christian faith and in the sanctions of the Christian religion."

By the simple plan suggested, without the aid of complicated and easily disarranged machinery, we propose to scatter the black cloud of illiteracy and immorality now pressing upon us, by an army of missionary teachers who shall carry the simple truths of the decalogue in one hand and the primer in the other, and, by a pure and blameless life, lead this unfortunate people to a higher plane of existence.

As to the means by which this great result is to be accomplished, our common sense demands that, in justice to the States upon which this illiteracy was forced, and which now stand powerless before it as a dangerous political element beyond any legal or reasonable control, in justice to the negro himself thus thrust entirely unprepared into the possession of the greatest political inheritance our Republic or any civilized government can bestow, the national government, in some way conformable to the Constitution and the laws, shall come to their relief. Believing that, if the government had the power to enfranchise the negro, the co-ordinate power to prepare him for the franchise, or to indemnify the States for his preparation, may exist; and if such power does not exist, that it is incumbent upon us to provide for it by constitutional amendment.

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon the relations of

this problem to the prosperity, or even to the perpetuity, of our Republic. It will be sufficient to suggest what an able statistician has already mathematically demonstrated, that, upon the basis of the tenth census, "in ten decades the whole population of the United States will number three hundred and thirty-six millions, of which one hundred and ninety-two millions will be black, and that, in the Southern States, the blacks will outnumber the whites by nearly one hundred millions."

Already in three of the Southern States, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina, there are large negro majorities which, if their franchise was fully exercised in any public question involving their race or color prejudices, could subvert every institution of a civilized government; and "in all but five of the States there were enough illiterate voters to have reversed the result of the last presidential election in each of these States."

We trust that this incomplete presentation of the facts will suggest the absolute and immediate necessity for government aid in suppressing the growth of illiteracy throughout the country, and averting not only possible but probable disaster. In the light of these facts and considerations, it is evident that we can best help the negro by recognizing at once his actual condition and capacities; that we cannot expect great progress or a high degree of culture by our standard of comparison; that his interests and our own as common citizens will be best promoted by abandoning the forcing process, either by education or politics; that the halo of false sentiment, which naturally surrounds an object distant and obscure, is a serious injury to the negro, in causing demands to be made upon him and upon those among whom his lot is cast which neither he nor they are able to meet, and thus contributing to the misunderstanding which, owing to this false sentiment and mistakes as to facts, at present prevails.

The negro is the Nation's ward in honor, and we are bound, North and South, by our common humanity, by the credit of our superior race and civilization, by the oppression and injustice he has suffered at our hands, to raise him by education to a higher plane than he now occupies, and to fit him for the proper exercise of his civil rights.

It is evident that these rights are in his own keeping, and can only be maintained when he is properly prepared for the exercise of the highest and most important privilege of the Republican citizen, — the elective franchise.

In conclusion, we commend the thoughtful consideration of this subject and the facts presented to those who honestly desire to maintain the honor and peaceful perpetuity of the Nation.