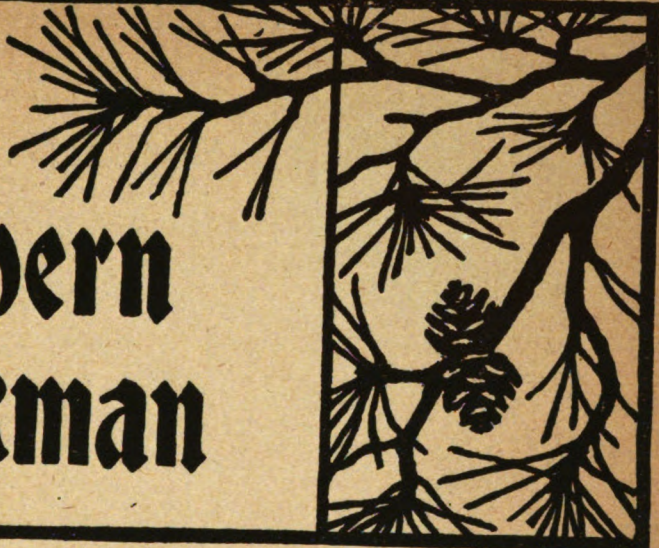


The Southern Workman



Vol. XXX

NOVEMBER, 1901

No. 11

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- Neatha and the White-Man's Bird,
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THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN, founded by General Armstrong in 1872 and published monthly by the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, is a magazine devoted to the interests of undeveloped races.

It contains direct reports from the heart of Negro and Indian populations with pictures of reservation, cabin, and plantation life, as well as information in regard to the school's 1101 graduates who have, since 1868, taught more than 150,000 children in 18 states in the South and West. It also contains local sketches; a running account of what is going on in the Hampton School; studies in Negro and Indian folk-lore and history; and editorial comment; while at the same time it provides an open forum for the discussion of ethnological, sociological and educational problems.

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THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN

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**Race
Individuality** "Our Relations with the Lower Races" is the title of an interesting article by Mr. Henry Rutgers Marshall in a recent number of the *International Journal of Ethics*. He begins by endeavoring to define the meaning of the expressions "higher" and "lower", and finds that neither material prosperity, nor happiness, nor physical vigor, nor higher intelligence makes the difference, but that those races are higher in which broad social instincts and the habit of co-operation exist. He likens the human family to the animal organization, and shows that as the different parts of the body have their distinct work to perform and are of the greatest service to the whole when they are in the best possible condition and do their own individual work most satisfactorily, so, perfect adjustment in interracial life will be gained only when, on the one hand, each race expresses its own instincts fully, and works out most completely the special capacities which differentiate it from other races; while, on the other hand, these expressions of its special capacities in some manner subserve the interests of the whole group of diverse races.

The thought which Mr. Marshall presents is a most important one. It is not intended that all races should be alike. It is quite impossible and perhaps not desirable to make a white man out of a Negro or an Indian. While a certain likeness is vitally important, while it is also important that races be released from the limitations of tribal or clan life, yet we should cherish that which is strong and fine in them just as we would prize the peculiarities in a new and rare plant. In all educational work the tendency is strong on the part of teachers to strive for uniformity, instead of developing individual characteristics. It is to be hoped that we shall learn in time not to dislike races that are different from ourselves in language, color, or life, to recognize the part that God meant them to play, to respect their peculiarities and to endeavor to preserve in them that which is of real value.



**The Indian
and
the Suffrage** In making the Indian a citizen and giving him the suffrage, caution is necessary to avoid the mistake of putting the ballot into his hands before he is prepared to use it intelligently. There are already signs of the evil results that

Crime and Criminality in the Negro Race

G. M. ELLIOTT *

NO physician undertakes the cure of a disease until he has made a diagnosis of the case. To treat it properly it is necessary to know the worst phases as well as those that are not so aggravated. It is not so agreeable to our sensibilities to deal with the unhappy feature of any matter, nevertheless at times it becomes necessary. Much is said and written respecting the progress the Negro has made along commendable lines. This article aims to show what he has done and is doing along unfortunate and non-commendable lines; not for the purpose of parading the ills of an unfortunate people, but that we may see the diseases that are to be cured, the wounds that are to be healed, the weak places that are to be strengthened.

We preface what we have to say on this subject by quoting a recent statement in the *New Orleans Picayune*, which is as follows: "Nobody pretends to say that the great body of these people (the Negroes) are other than good and law-abiding citizens . . . Not only is a great and cruel wrong done them when the Negro population is held responsible for Negro criminals, but it has the tendency to create increased lawlessness and crime."

This is a happy and timely declaration, coming as it does from a leading Southern paper and from a quarter not especially noted for friendliness toward the race. We have reached an era in our national life when all thoughtful people feel it their duty to use their influence to lessen the number of criminals. No reader of the daily papers can fail to note the enormous amount of crime committed by the Negro race. It has been shown with a measure of truth that this criminality is on the increase. The appalling fact confronts us. The disease is manifest. What is the remedy?

Our subject naturally suggests three things: First, *The Fact*; second, *The Cause*; third *The Remedy*.

I. *The Fact*.

Is it a fact that there is a growing tendency to crime among our Negro citizens? Or is it a fact that crimes among them are more numerous in proportion to the population than among other races in our country? If we can rely on statistics the statement does seem to be true. While statistics do sometimes misguide, yet those we make use of ought to be measurably reliable. They come from the national government. The government ought to have the best method of compiling statistics. What it gives forth should be correct. From such a source we gather the following data: Between the years 1870 and 1880, crime among the Negroes seems to have increased twenty-five per cent; between the years 1880 and 1890, the increase

* Pastor of the Mather-Perit Presbyterian Church, St. Augustine, Fla.

seems to have been thirty-three per cent. The Negro, constituting less than twelve per cent of the population of this country, furnishes thirty per cent of all the crimes of the country, including thirty-seven per cent of all homicides, fifty-seven per cent of all female homicides, and forty per cent of all assaults." We quote from another authority who by reason of position ought to be reliable. The writer says: "Three-fourths of the crimes in the South are committed by Negroes. The rising generation far outstrips in crime the generation that is passing off the stage. Of homicides from fifty to sixty years of age, the Negroes' furnish about one-fifth, which is not quite twice their share in proportion to the population; of homicides from thirty to forty years, they furnish about one-third; of those from twenty to thirty, nearly one-half: and of those under twenty years of age two-thirds are by Negroes, that is, sixteen times their share in proportion to the population."

These figures are startling. What shall we say in the face of them? No doubt many of the cases that go to swell these figures were cases where the persons charged were really innocent, but even with this allowance, the figures still startle us. Here is an effect. There must be a cause. As lovers of the highest interests of our country, it is our duty to search out the cause and apply a remedy. We are well aware that Negroes are often arrested and imprisoned unjustly, or for very slight offences, and that they are often falsely accused and made to suffer, and are then classed as criminals; but leaving sufficient margin for all such cases, and deducting accordingly, is not the criminal class still too large? Is it not out of proportion to the Negro's share of the population? This record ought to be changed; for the general good of our country it must be changed. Who are to change it? How is it to be changed? This brings us to consider

II *The Cause.*

1. UNFORTUNATE ENVIRONMENTS must be taken into account. The great mass of Negroes are yet poor; it could not reasonably be otherwise. They get small wages, and have not yet learned habits of thrift and economy. Poverty, of necessity, makes poor environments. Most of the crimes in the race are those against honesty. Pilfering and petty thieving, often arising out of straitened circumstances, cause many to be arrested and sent to prison or put on the chain-gang. In all such cases their names go down on the criminal record. Environment naturally includes the home—in short, it is the home. It must be remembered that slavery provided lodging for the Negro, but did not give him a home, without which there can be no home-training. The Negro was liberated without a proper conception of the duties and obligations of a true home, and it is not reasonable therefore to suppose that his family life can be all that is desired. With him the family is only thirty-eight years old. Its beginning was crude. It was in a log cabin which he did not own, or in a rented house in some city or town. In many

instances, especially in the rural districts where most of the colored people live, it is still in the log cabin, where the kitchen, dining-room, parlor, bed-room and bath-room are all in one. The home supplies are most scanty. Luxury is unknown; even necessities are never fully met.

In many rural districts, because of bad management and for want of knowledge of bargain-making, a floating debt rests like a nightmare upon the home from year to year. No race can develop happily in the midst of such surroundings. Many of the young men, becoming discouraged and disgusted at this hopeless condition of things, leave the farm and go to the city or to the public works. Most of them are illiterate and improperly trained—for in the South the rural sections furnish very poor facilities for education. The going of these young men to the city, usually means going into temptation, into crime and into prison.

2. IDLENESS is another cause of crime. The circumstances of the Negro are such that it is not possible to keep all the children busy. Many become vagrant; they loaf about or look for cheap jobs. Being more generally idle than employed they become lazy. Laziness leads to vice, vice leads to crime, crime leads to prison, prison leads to ruin. And thus it is that hundreds of this race are year by year drifting into crime for want of suitable employment. It is worthy of note that most Negro criminals are from the cities and towns and not from the country, where they are, as a rule, more regularly employed.

3. INTEMPERANCE is still another cause of crime. Those who loaf about the streets of our cities invariably find their way into the bar-room, where is bred every form of sin and evil. In many of our cities, crowds of boys and young men may be seen loafing about the saloons and gambling houses. From these our chain-gangs and prisons are constantly supplied. Many who are regularly employed go to these places and spend their evenings in drinking and gambling. Quarreling, cutting and shooting are often the outcome of these evening gatherings, and next morning more names are added to the criminal list.

Closely allied with intemperance as a cause of crimes among the colored people is a low state of morals. We feel safe in asserting that either whiskey or a woman is at the bottom of two-thirds of the crimes among this people.

4. IMMORALITY. The brothel, the saloon and the gambling den go hand in hand. These three evils—this satanic trinity—are the fruitful sources of crime among the colored people. The system of slavery did not teach morals, hence inherited traits now afflict the race. Base passions, unbridled by reason of a liberty that bondage gave, developed a tendency to carnal lust that is now not only a curse to the Negro race but also to the race that held the Negro in bondage. When we remember that there are yet thousands of Negroes who have not been taught the evils of former habits, we cannot won-

der that there should yet be much crime among them. This thought brings us to consider another one of the causes of crime.

5. PREVAILING ILLITERACY is a universal cause of crime. We cannot speak of a race as educated until the majority of its members have at least a common-school education. Is it among the illiterate or educated Negroes that we find the most criminals? In visiting prisons and prisoners, we have been careful to ask these three questions: (1). Have you ever attended school for any length of time? (2). Have you ever attended Sabbath-school and church regularly? (3). Have you any trade? Almost invariably we have received a negative answer to all these questions. The conclusion is that the criminal class is not made up from those who have spent any considerable time in our best schools. Illiteracy may therefore be set down as one of the chief causes of crime among the Negroes. It should further be remembered, that notwithstanding so much has been done in the way of Negro education, yet the work has not kept pace with the natural increase of the race. In other words, the Negro increases faster than he is educated. This being true in the midst of improper home-training, and unfavorable environments, the natural result is an increase in crime.

III. *The Remedy.*

We have seen the disease. It is an aggravated case. Now, what is the remedy? How shall this criminal class be made smaller?

1. *Begin with the home.* A large percentage of the criminal class are not the immediate offspring of slave parents, but are their grandchildren. The tendency of the slaves on receiving their freedom was to give their children undue latitude in their privileges. Such children therefore received no correct idea of child-training. Not being properly trained themselves and not having over them the restraining influence that their parents had had, it was quite natural that they should fail to rear their children properly. In this way we account for much of the tendency to crime in the present generation. Most parents seem to think they have done their duty when they have provided food, clothing and lodging for their children. That training which is to develop character is either altogether neglected or is left to the teacher. Character is formed at the fireside. If the parents permit the child to grow up unruly, to live most of the time in the streets, to have all kinds of companionship, to go wherever the child-mind leads, then the home becomes a training school for criminals. This condition obtains too largely among the colored people.

2. *Better pulpit instruction* is another remedy. No doubt among the colored people the pulpit exerts a strong influence. The majority of them do as they are advised from the pulpit. The people watch the pastor's conduct. What he does they will do. It is exceedingly unfortunate that in searching the criminal docket and the prison roll the names of many so-called preachers are found. This thing must come to an end before we can very greatly lessen crime among the

rank and file of the people. There must be a better type of preachers for the masses, and the masses must be trained not to accept unworthy leadership. The great trouble is that the people are frequently more willing to follow a bad leader than they are to follow a good one. These are plain and (to many) unpalatable facts, but they are facts, nevertheless. We insist that the Negro race cannot come out of the wilderness with the present pulpit leadership that controls the masses of the illiterate.

3. *General education* is a remedy. It has been asserted that education does not make the Negro's condition any better but rather makes him more criminal. Such a charge cannot be sustained by facts. The large criminal class that we have been discussing never came for any length of time, if at all, under the influence of our good Christian schools. Bishop Fowler of the Methodist Episcopal Church, not long ago made the following statement in a public speech: "Of all the Negroes that have been educated in our mission schools, not one has ever been lynched or put on the chain-gang." Hon. W. T. Harris, United States Superintendent of Public Instruction, says: "It can be shown from reliable data that the chances of success of properly educated persons in both character and attainments is 250 to 1 over the uneducated." When the masses of any people are illiterate, the criminal class will be large; the great need in the South today is a general educational uplift.

4. *The opening up of more business avenues* is another remedy. The president of one of our Negro colleges in the South says; "Our people drift into crime because they are idle and hungry." There is much truth in this. There must be something for the boys and girls to do as soon as they face the world. They must early be taught to have an aim in life; and to work and study with reference to that aim. Negro boys and girls do not all take to one kind of work any more than white boys and girls do. Hence they should be educated for that employment to which their talents are best adapted. Then, as means and wealth accumulate in the race, places of business should be established to give those who have been looking forward to such business an opportunity to help themselves and others.

5. *Business training, or industrial education* is another plan to reduce crime. A high authority says: "Nine-tenths of the Negro criminals have no trades." In one of our states seventy-seven per cent of the criminals had no trade or regular occupation. The old Jewish law required every boy to learn a trade. The influence of such a law is seen among that people till this day. The number of criminals among them is the smallest in proportion to their share of the population of any race. What other races need the Negro needs. Give every boy and every girl a chance to learn a trade—such a trade as native ability makes possible and such as will by diligence bring success in after life.

This work of educating and uplifting this unfortunate people is not the task of a few, but is the work of the entire nation. For the welfare of the nation, every individual and every state should be interested in it. We cannot have an increasing criminal class without such being a menace to the highest interests of our national commonwealth.

The Future of the Pueblos *

MARY E. DISSETTE

“**Q**UE gana la escuela para mi familia, Senora ?” (What does the school gain for my family, madam ?) asks the weary old father with his hoe on his shoulder. “Escuela no buena ! Moliendo es bueno,” (School is no good, grinding is good) says the more positive, conservative Indian mother as she stops her work at the *metate* to wipe her dripping face.

That our present methods of education, in the day schools, do not produce results which answer satisfactorily this question of the Indian father we must admit ; that they have not succeeded, very far, in overcoming the prejudices of the Indian mother we cannot deny. We have some of the very finest teaching talent in these day schools. Taken as a whole, the day-school teachers of New Mexico are a body of workers of which the service may well be proud. The sacrifices they are making and the heroic efforts they are putting forth for the betterment of their schools excite my constant admiration and sympathy.

There are about 8000 *self-supporting* Pueblo Indians, in 26 villages, 20 of which have day schools, costing the United States not less than \$20,000 annually, besides the much larger sum expended upon the boarding schools. In most cases the results obtained in these day schools fall lamentably short of the aim of the teachers because of conditions for which they are in no way responsible and over which they have not the slightest control. Occasionally the conditions in the home show the effect of educational influence and furnish an argument in favor of education which I am not slow to take advantage of ; but more frequently I am appalled at the length and breadth of the chasm which exists between the school and the home of the average Indian child. How to bridge this chasm temporarily, and how to fill it up eventually, are the questions which most perplex the thoughtful teachers of the Indian service.

* Extracts from a paper read before the Indian Department of the National Educational Association at Detroit in July, 1901.