

# THE Presbyterian Quarterly.

---

NO. 53--JULY, 1900.

---

## I. RACE PROBLEM IN THE SOUTH.\*

It is my purpose to speak dispassionately and for truth sake only. We have for discussion a question of vast importance to the nation, the understanding of which is of great import to a large section of our country, and of even greater consequence to the negro race. I speak as a friend of the negro, provided you let friendship mean a willingness to do for him that which is for his very best interests, and which would not be good if done for an equal number of white men living anywhere in this union. The best friend of the negro is he who recognizes that negroes and whites are not equal, and it is beyond the power of man to make them so. The reason is, a negro is a negro and a white man a white man. This distinction will appear absurd to you here in New England, while it will be satisfactory to any Southern man as intelligent and as kind as any citizen of your great Commonwealth. The failure to accept the dictum of your Southern white brethren has led to, what I consider, the greatest wrong ever perpetrated upon an inferior race, viz: the extension of the franchise to those helpless in the grasp of such a power for evil.

I shall undertake to account for the attitude of the public mind toward slavery that finally gave such a resultant. In doing so, I shall necessarily refer to that which is already familiar, but probably has never been considered by you in relation of cause and effect. Beginning with the Missouri

---

\*An address delivered before the Unity Club of New Bedford, Mass., April 27, 1900.

compromise in 1821, it is interesting to note that every public question of any proportions was directly affected in all discussion and finally settled in view of the apparently disassociated problem of American Slavery. From 1821 to 1854 it will be observed by all students of public events that there was no difference of opinion between the North and the South. The question then, as it has always been since, was handled with the view of its effect upon political parties in determining their success or failure, and never with a view of what was best for the country, the institution of slavery, or the negro race. There was not an utterance made on this subject nor an opinion held by a Southern Statesman, that did not find its parallel in a Northern Statesman.

It is significant that Mr. Emerson remarked about Mr. Webster, not about a Southern Statesman, "Every drop of blood in this man's veins has eyes that look downward." However many or few names prior to this time may be written down at the North as opposed to slavery, as it existed in America, an equal number can be written down at the South as opposed to slavery as an institution, with the difference that the Southern man was more than apt to be a slave owner, and the Northern man certainly not one.

A brief review may recall the political situation:—From the adoption of the Missouri Compromise in February, 1821, until January, 1836, slavery excited no serious discussion in congress. In May, 1833, Andrew Jackson wrote, "The tariff was only the pretext, and disunion and a Southern Confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro or slavery question." The great political parties ignored the issue, but forces were at work beyond their control. Lundy and Garrison began the agitation which led to the formation of anti-slavery societies. In a convention held at Baltimore in 1826, eighty-one such societies were represented, of which seventy-three were in slaveholding communities. In January, 1831, Garrison began to publish "The Liberator" in Boston. In November the New England Anti-Slavery Society was founded. In 1833

the New York Anti-Slavery Society was formed, and a convention at Philadelphia established the American Anti-Slavery Society. A single sentence from the declaration of principles adopted by the American Society summed up their position:—"We also maintain that there are at the present time the highest obligations resting upon the people of the free states to remove slavery by moral and political action, as prescribed in the Constitution of the United States." This was a clean cut statement of the issue, and it disclosed the fact that the public mind was by no means prepared for its reception, and that men at the North the equal in every particular to those advocating it, were bitterly opposed to it. It was the effort of a few private citizens with little influence and small means, grappling with a gigantic evil, supported by the political, social, and business powers of the country. Many Southern men were opposed to slavery, and acquiesced in a system which it seemed impossible to change without disaster, political and business. Edward Everett expressed the sentiments of many when he said "The great relation of servitude in some form or other with greater or less departure from the theoretic equality of men, is inseparable from our nature; it is a condition of life as well as any other, to be justified by morality, religion, and international law," and that it was right "to abstain from a discussion which, if not abandoned, there is great reason to fear will prove the rock on which the Union will split." Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston, Lovejoy was killed in Illinois, and anti-slavery agitation was met by mob violence in almost every Northern State. Southern Postmasters took anti-slavery publications from the mails. The Postmaster-General, Amos Kendall, admitted this was illegal, but said "By no act or direction of mine, official or private, would I be induced knowingly to aid in giving circulation to papers of this description, directly or indirectly." From this period on, every public question of proportions was affected by slavery in its settlement. The struggle over the right of petition was caused by a petition praying Congress for

action against slavery. The twenty-fourth Congress on May 26, 1836, ruled that all petitions relating in any way to slavery, be laid on the table. Against this rule Mr. Adams waged unrelenting war, until, in the second session of the twenty-eighth Congress it was abandoned.

In 1845 the annexation of Texas was before the Congress of the United States ; it was a critical time and the debates were long and fierce ; the entire discussion turned on the question of slavery. The consequences of the admission of Texas were far-reaching. It divided the Whigs of Massachusetts into two parties—sometimes called the “Conscience Whigs” and the “Cotton Whigs.” In 1846, the contest between Mr. Winthrop and Dr. S. G. Howe was due to Winthrop’s vote on the Mexican War bill, which in turn was determined by his views on slavery. September 29th, 1847, Daniel Webster was a candidate for the next Presidential nomination. In a speech to the convention, he took ground against the extension of slavery, but was averse to affirmative anti-slavery action. His candidacy was seriously affected by this question, and he failed of nomination. Early in 1848 the Mexican War was ended by a treaty which ceded to the United States New Mexico and Upper California, in return for a payment of fifteen million dollars.

The question, “should this new area be free or slave soil,” had been raised early in the war. This was the most important question before the country. Whigs and Democrats alike recognized that a decided position would alienate some of their followers. The Democratic Convention nominated Lewis Cass on a platform which did not deal with the question, but denied the power of Congress to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the States. The Whig convention was even more diplomatic. It nominated Gen. Taylor, at once, a successful General and a Southern slaveholder, and adjourned without adopting any platform. This surrender of the Whig party was the immediate cause of revolt, and the purpose so to do was announced by Charles Allen and Henry Wilson in

convention itself. On August 9th, at Buffalo, a national convention nominated Martin Van Buren and Chas. Francis Adams; thus a new party, known as the "Free Soil" party, was formed, whose leading principle was opposition to the extension of slavery, and to its longer continuance wherever the national government was responsible for it. This stated the position soon to be taken by the Republican Party, and it is not necessary to trace the causes further leading to the formation of this great political body. We have now the issue squarely before us.

In 1845, in the autumn after the annexation of Texas, in many respects the greatest man the country has ever produced entered the arena; that man was Charles Sumner. Mr. Sumner was *sine cera*, one of whom, it might be said, behold a public man in whom there is no guile. He was pure and honest, a scholar and a thinker, a servant of truth and right, regardless of men and parties, as deadly in his invective against the North as against the South, whenever the one or the other struck at the principle of his contention. He was childlike but never childish. He often spoke and wrote in such way as to alienate his warmest friends and sting to the quick his enemies, and was as surprised as a child to think that anyone could possibly be offended at anything he had said, so completely did this truly great man rise above personalities in his attempt to conserve right. No nobler man ever lived than Charles Sumner. Nothing more to be regretted and more unjustifiable has ever happened to any public man than Mr. Brooks' cowardly assault upon Mr. Sumner, and the defense of the act by his own people of South Carolina and other Southern States, is only to be explained from the heated condition of the blood, incident to the incisive debate that had so long agitated the public mind. It is impossible to study this period of our national history, and be surprised at anything that happened.

Mr. Sumner defined his position thus: "It cannot be doubted that the Constitution may be amended so that it shall cease to render any sanction to slavery. The power



to amend carries with it the previous right to inquire into and discuss the matter to be amended, and the right extends to all parts of the country over which the Constitution is spread—the North as well as the South.”

This statement defines the limits in which Mr. Sumner's action against slavery was always confined. He is the only man, so far as I know, who discussed slavery always in the abstract up to this time, and never in the concrete; who discussed it independent of all political and business interests, who spoke for right and right alone. So powerfully did the man impress himself upon the country, that a convention in Kentucky, composed of delegates from twenty-four counties, pronounced slavery “injurious to the prosperity of the commonwealth, inconsistent with the fundamental principles of free government, contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and adverse to a pure state of morals,” and declared “that it ought not to be increased, and that it ought not to be perpetuated in the commonwealth.” A Richmond newspaper said, “two-thirds of the people of Virginia are open and undisguised advocates of ridding the State of slavery.” This latter we take to be untrue, but it at least shows that Mr. Sumner's influence was strongly felt.

#### ATTITUDE OF REPUBLICAN PARTY.

No party ever came to life through such birth-throes as the Republican party. With the country on the verge of internecine war and a great voice like Mr. Sumner's lifted in behalf of right, regardless of all consequences, it is not to be wondered that the party in its early life was guilty of faults for which it has not yet made atonement, and perhaps never can. When we remember that the party had control of the ship of state when the country had been engaged for four years in internecine strife, and that Lee's surrender brought to a close the greatest war of the world, we expect mistakes to be made, and in such disorder and confusion misunderstanding is certain to be, and injustice is sure to follow. In such times men do not understand each other and measures are adopted, with pure motives, that are dis-

astrous in their carrying out. In such times men do not understand God. It is looked upon as an inscrutable providence by the South, as well as the North, that Mr. Lincoln should have been taken away when he was, and in the horrible manner of his death. I must confess that the inscrutable providence of the times to me is, why Mr. Sumner was permitted so long to direct the party he had been instrumental in organizing. He was too abstract a man for confused times and when action was demanded. Such a man knows no concession, and without concession wise measures are impossible. During reconstruction times John Bright was discussing the extension of the franchise in the British Parliament, and Mr. Sumner's mind took no note of the difficulties in the way of applying this principle. He said, "the work of liberation will not be completed, until the equal rights of every person once claimed as a slave, are placed under the safe-guard of irreversible guaranties." Whatever may be said for or against President Johnston, to my mind he showed greater insight into the problem, when on the 29th of May he issued a proclamation of amnesty, and another providing for reconstruction in North Carolina, "by a convention to be chosen only by persons qualified to vote before secession," thus excluding all negroes from the electorate. Mr. Johnston had split rails with negroes, and as we say down South, "He sho' did understand a nigger." During the period of reconstruction men were controlled by passion and not directed by reason. That time to the South was Hell come upon the earth. No people, since the day that man was created upon the earth, ever endured such outrages and indignities, and had they not been starved out during four years of fighting, they would have taken up arms after '65, in an attempt to throw off the yoke of the conquerer. In illustration of the insanity of the time, I call attention to the utterance of a man who was regarded before his death as the greatest living preacher. Phillips Brooks, on the Sunday Mr. Lincoln's body lay in state in the city of Philadelphia, spoke as follows: "Abraham Lincoln was the type-man of the coun-

try, but not of the whole country. This character which we have been trying to describe, was the character of an American under the discipline of freedom. There was another American character which had been developed under the influence of slavery. There was no one American character embracing the land, there were two characters, with impulses of irrepressible and deadly conflict. This citizen whom we have been honoring and praising represented one. The whole great scheme with which he was ultimately brought in conflict, and which has finally killed him, represented the other. Besides this nature, true and fresh and new, there was another nature, false and effete and old. The one nature found itself in a new world, and set itself to discover the new ways for the new duties that were given it. The other nature, full of the false pride of blood, set itself to reproduce in the new world the institutions and the spirit of the old, to build anew the structure of the feudalism which had been corrupt in its own day, and which had been left far behind by the advancing conscience and needs of the progressing race." Only when reason is dethroned by passion can good men speak words so derogatory to a great section of the country, and which have been refuted every time the stars and stripes have been unfurled, and men have been called to their defence. The tramp of soldiers has been heard from the Rio Grande and the Gulf, and that tramp will be heard so long as the Republic stands.

SLAVERY AND ITS EFFECTS ON RIGHTS. THE FRANCHISE  
AND ITS EFFECTS ON RIGHTS.

November the 4th, 1845, in Boston, Mr. Sumner said: "The Government and Independence of the United States are founded on the adamantine truth of Equal Rights and the Brotherhood of all men, declared on the 4th of July, 1776, a truth receiving new and constant recognition in the progress of time, and which is the great lesson from our country to the world." We of the South concur in every word of this attempt to define our position, as a



nation, before the world ; and yet the greater portion of the meaning in Mr. Sumner's mind is not in ours, showing at least, that the question of rights is debatable, and the meaning of the language of the Constitution is by no means self evident.

We hold that slavery involves right in the constitutional sense, and that the franchise does not involve right, but involves the question of expediency. Up to 1835 in North Carolina free negroes exercised the right of the franchise. Gov. Graham was elected, the first time he entered public life, by one vote, and that vote was cast by a free negro. The agitation of the public mind in 1835 was such that it was expedient to debar the free Negro from the privilege of voting, thus early was this the doctrine of sections of the South.

#### SLAVERY.

I have no word too strong to express my condemnation of slavery as an institution. Its existence in the South was due to a sequence in cause over which the country apparently had no control after once the iniquity of slave trading had been touched by the nation. You at the North are, if anything, more to blame for its existence in America than we at the South. Of this condition of slavery I have no word of condemnation. It was the best form of it that ever existed since Adam was created. But the defence of slavery, as an institution, such as was given to it by many leading statesmen and pulpiteers of the South, may be set aside as absurd. It is useless to deny that slavery was defended as a divine right. Good men taught it. I was taught it by a man as pure as ever occupied a chair in an institution for the education of youth. When I remembered what the people of the South passed through during the war and during the period of reconstruction at your hands, I understood how prejudice and hatred blinded to the truth. It would have been strange if the teaching had been otherwise. Nevertheless slavery in any form, anywhere on the face of the earth, is damnable. It is a wrong against God and man. I have never seen an argument in its justifica-

tion that would not at the same time justify those things that by common consent are damnable. The Bible gives a history of slavery and polygamy, and the one as well as the other, can be justified with the arguments usually advanced for slavery. When the mind and body of a human being is controlled by a master, the question of right is involved, and no penalty is too great to pay for the settlement of where right begins and ends. The civil war was horrible, it saturated the land with blood, but if it helped in settling this question it was cheap.

#### THE GREATEST BLUNDER OF THE NATION.

It could hardly be expected that a political party, in power at such a time as that immediately preceding and following the war, should not make blunders; but to my mind the most egregious wrong ever perpetrated in the history of the Republic, was when the Constitution was so amended as to give equality of suffrage to the negro with the white race of this Union. The folly of this part of our history is being written now. It was a gross wrong to the white race; it was a greater wrong to the negro race.

A scrutiny of the condition of affairs will make clear the wrong to the Southern white. I wish to set this forth by analogy. I prefer to take my incidents from the New Testament, that I may give to the argument the force of being Christian. One of the noted men whom the Apostle Paul persuaded to embrace Christianity, was Philemon. This man was a slave-holder, and possessed a slave named Onesimus. Philemon seems to have recognized, even for slaves, a right of personal freedom in the highest sphere, and he did not force his slaves to become converts to Christianity, but, as was the manner of many slave-holders in the South, gave his slaves the opportunity of having the arguments for the new faith presented. Among the hearers of the great apostle was Onesimus. He heard Paul's exhortation, in which he called upon his auditors to stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. The theory of Christian liberty was as yet too subtle for

him, but the fact was patent and inspiring. Here was a religion which asserted in the most unqualified terms the equality of all men before God; which declared in the most uncompromising accents that with him there was no respect of persons; which maintained that in his sight all distinction was abolished between Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, freeman and slave. The two ideas of bondage and freedom took possession of him, heart and brain, and Philemon became to him as unbearable as if he had been the object of despotic tyranny. One day Paul was surprised, near the conclusion of his first Roman period, by a visit from Onesimus, with the information that he was a run-a-way slave, and that he had left his master because of the preaching of the great Apostle. This incident is of greater significance than many suppose. Paul had now to give the Christian answer, for the world, to Onesimus, on slavery, and at the same time give direction to the conduct of a man who was wronged by an institution without divine sanction, and un-Christian. Whether Paul understood, or did not understand, the tremendous issues dependent upon his answers to Onesimus, the direction he gave the matter is worthy of all imitation. He unhesitatingly taught Onesimus that slavery was wrong and that his right was to be free from Philemon, but that there were other considerations which should determine the exercise of that right. He taught Onesimus that the new doctrine was not designed to reduce men to one level, but to establish a new social grade. He knew well that, if society were made a plain to-day, it would be studded again with mountains to-morrow. He knew well that, however equal men might be in rights, they were, and always would be very unequal in merits.

The condition confronted was this: "Christianity had a right to proclaim the freedom of man as man. Nothing was simpler than to make such a proclamation. Paul had only to connive at the flight of Onesimus and to indorse the act by his own imprimatur; it would have been a signal to the whole slave population of the world that the

watch word of the new religion was emancipation from servile bonds. What would have been the effect of such a signal? Doubtless it would have instantaneously added to the numerical strength of Christianity; the kingdom of heaven would immediately have been taken by violence, and so would the kingdoms of earth. It is impossible to conceive a more perfect picture of anarchy than would have been created by a sudden and successful insurrection of the slave population. The numerical proportion of the bound to the unbound in the Roman Empire is a matter of dispute; probably the bond outnumbered the free. Figure anything approaching to such a proportion, and then to the quantity add the quality. Consider that the slave population represented at its worst that state which we designate by the name of Paganism—a name which embraces as its leading characteristic the predominance of the sensuous over the spiritual. It was Paganism without its restraints and without its refinements. What would have been the effect of the emancipation of these millions—the emancipation of an un-Christianized, unhumanized horde impelled by the fanaticism of a new watch-word, accomplished in a moment of time, and achieved by a stroke of violence? Could it have had any other result than one—the transformation of order into anarchy, the uprooting of that line of civilization on which Christianity itself had begun to move?

I have taken the picture ready made. With slight variation it describes the condition of the South. What the Republican party did, the Apostle Paul could conceive of no condition of servitude as justifying. By one act it lifted four millions of slaves to equal rights with their white superiors, and four millions in whom the sensuous predominates over all other qualities of heart or head. The only safeguard for the Southern white, was the kindness which the negro had received at his hands during all the history of Southern slavery; and if the malicious lie of general cruelty, on the part of Southern slave-holders, can find refutation nowhere else, let it find it here. When a great political party turned loose four million slaves with author-

ity and backed by power, to perform their will, they had to be led by corrupt white men, and driven by corrupt politicians to do even as badly as they did. Be it said here that the kindness of the negro race during the war, when every gun was at the front, and women and children unprotected on the farm, is without parallel in the history of man.

#### THE EFFECT ON THE NEGRO RACE.

Nothing ever done by the most malignant enemy of the negro has been as detrimental as the amendment of the Constitution, by which the right of a vote was given him. It was like putting a stick in his hands, and then compelling him to break his own back with it. The enormous power of the franchise in the hands of so many newly made citizens, was at once taken advantage of by unscrupulous white men, both North and South, and from that day to this the Negro vote has been a commodity on the political market, to be bought and sold for every manner and kind of corruption. For a long while, at least, it destroyed all hope in the South of accomplishing anything in the way of good for that section. It is not necessary that I should undertake to tell the manner of the doing. Thomas Nelson Page, in "Red Rock," has given the picture of an intelligent Northern man amid the scenes as they were enacted, and while the story is fiction, it is fiction founded on fact, and the conclusion of this intelligent Northern character as to the wrong of giving the power of suffrage to the negro race, is more than confirmed, under one of the modern wonders of the world—the speed of communication with all parts of the earth—when so many right thinking and just men, of the north, have seen with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears, things they once would not believe on the highest testimony. The period immediately following the war was fraught with influences that as completely changed the negro as if he had been put to school. The carpet-bag regime was indeed a school of training for outrage, and the negro succumbed to this influence. From a long term of servitude he had learned to admire author-



ity, pomp, and wealth. The war destroyed pomp and wealth. His former master was attired in rags, and his former mistress had laid aside her diamonds. The Federal government had destroyed the white man's authority by giving equal rights of suffrage to the negro. When he was told that he was as good as the white man, he could, at least, see that there was not the difference that once existed. Under this tutelage he was changed; his kindness changed to hate, his respect to contempt, his reverence to insult, his temperance to intemperance, his self control to rape. In a word, the Negro was brutalized. The result was that the whites organized into bands of various characters and names, and many negroes were killed. The result of this has been that to the present time the papers of the country have kept up crimination and recrimination. And I believe a paper called the *Independent*, published in New York, still keeps it up in the same old way, refusing to believe that things have changed at all.

I wish to show how thoroughly this school of out-laws trained the negroes. There is in Alabama a negro named Booker Washington at the head of an industrial school for the training of negroes. On February the 12th, 1899, he was invited by the Union League Club of Philadelphia, in commemoration of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, to deliver an address, in which he said: "My first acquaintance with our hero and benefactor is this: night after night, before the dawn of day, on an old slave plantation in Virginia, I recall the form of my sainted mother, bending over a batch of rags that enveloped my body, on a dirt floor, breathing a fervent prayer to Heaven that "Massa Lincoln might succeed." If this was intended to give a picture of slave life in Virginia, it is very misleading. But what I apprehend Booker Washington wished to do was to express the opinion he thought his Northern friends had in their minds, and that they rather expected he would say something derogatory of slavery. Booker Washington is a great negro but not a great man, and he and all other negroes I have seen show this weakness when circumstances give the opportu-

nity of currying favor with their friends by obtaining sympathy through fiction.

The reason why the intelligent people of the North failed to understand the situation better, was due in no small part to "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This book has had a sale larger than all other books, with, perhaps, the two exceptions of "Pilgrim's Progress" and the Bible. In view of this, its great influence is understood. The plot of the book was conceived at Ripley, Ohio, in the house of a Presbyterian minister named Rankin. Mr. Rankin's house occupied the summit of the highest hill in that section on the banks of the Ohio River. It was the point known as the "Underground Railroad," where runaway slaves crossed on their way North and to Canada. Whatever cruelty attached to the slave system, she saw in its most exaggerated form.

Slave-dealers and those hunting slaves for the reward of their return were here. I suspect they were horribly treated. Mr. Rankin was recognized as an apostle to freedom, and I believe has erected to him in the little cemetery at Ripley, a monument with an inscription that states as much. Under these conditions, and a fertile imagination fired by prejudice, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was a natural product; but when sent to the world as a correct exposition of the condition of slavery as it existed in the South, it was an enormous misrepresentation.

#### THE AMENDMENT.

After the endurance of outrage and insolence, from the negro race, for thirty-five years, the white people of the South have undertaken to deal with the question. Many people living at remote distances from the South are anxious to understand what is proposed, under the amendments to the State Constitutions; such, for instance, as is proposed to be voted on, in August next, in the State of North Carolina. I will say that the wise men in the South will have the negro's good at heart, as well as their own, in whatever measure may be finally decided upon. I am convinced that some action must be speedily taken—for the good of the

negro race. The best action would be for the nation to take from the Constitution of the United States the 15th 15th amendment, stating it was put there in time of passion and under the pressure of misguided enthusiasm. By this one act all friction between the white and negro races would in time be removed. It would convince the negro that his outrages would not be tolerated by the government, and restore somewhat of the feeling of the ante-bellum negro who knew there was no escape from his wrong doing. This race cannot be controlled anywhere on the earth without some such fear of the consequences of its acts. If this cannot be accomplished, then the States must do the best they can.

#### THE REMEDY PROPOSED.

Before another generation of negroes is allowed to arise, worse, as we must see than the present, the people of the South must act. First they must remove the negro from politics—not, perhaps, forever—but certainly until the proper time. When such distant and alien advisers as the Philadelphia *Inquirer* can see what the following statement indicates, it is blindness that prevents the man on the ground from seeing. That journal, in a recent editorial (February 6th, 1900), says: "We have made many mistakes during the course of the century in the United States. What is called the 'Southern question' revolves almost exclusively around the ballot box. The freedom of the ballot box is altogether too free." To deprive the ignorant negro of the political liberty, which he now uses for license, will, by the immediate change it will bring in his relation to the white man, soon indemnify him for the seeming loss. It will, let us hope, soon bring again the old relations in feeling that existed between the races at the close of the war. If the change is long delayed, however, it will come too late; the young whites of the South, more familiar with the "new issue" than the old, have as we have seen but little of that sympathetic feeling for the race that their fathers had. The negro is to them a political menace only; they

have no cause to love him and in spite of their traditions they are beginning to hate him. It were better for both races that this should be changed, at the first possible moment.

Some one will say, "what about the negro's right to vote." The answer is that the question of right is not involved. It isn't anybody's right to vote. I accept Herbert Spencer's doctrine of rights. Voting, in this country, is a question of expediency for whites as well as blacks. It may not be expedient for you here in Massachusetts to vote; then you should not vote. Once upon a time you thought it was not expedient for a large number of the best citizens of this country not to vote, and you said so, and they did not vote. These were also South of the Mason's and Dixon's line. We say, on the ground of expediency, that the negro, in North Carolina, ought not to vote.

My fellow men, here in cold New England, it is expedient that he should not. It will be the beginning of great things for the negro, and without which redemption to good citizenship is impossible. Whatever else the Spanish-American war failed to accomplish, it did accomplish this: it destroyed all misgiving in our own minds, and convinced the world that this country is one. We are a union, and whenever we are attacked, whether here on this New England coast, or the Mexican border, we are a union against the world. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have intimated to the South, "Write the word Union, and you may ask for what you will, and it shall be granted." We write the word "Union," as we have written it in blood, and our request is that you let us deal with the race problem in the South. We of the South understand the negro. We love him. He is the best friend on earth when uncorrupted. By this amendment we are only trying to do what the wisest and best men in the South besought you to do in 1861. The Virginia Secession Convention of that year, in Section 7, of Article XIII, of its proceedings prayed, "The elective franchise and the right to hold office, whether Federal or Territorial, shall not be exercised by persons who are of

the African race." The condition of affairs in Wilmington, N. C., last year, was due to a failure in apprehending this restriction proposed to be put upon the negro race, and it may serve as illustration of the cause of riots elsewhere, and be prophetic of worse things in store for the negro, unless measures are adopted to hedge him about and protect him. This Anglo-Saxon race is long suffering, but it is the fiercest race on earth, and when the day of retribution comes, harrowing tales will be told. Disfranchisement is the remedy, for things will not continue always as they now are. I take this occasion to state that I have little patience with the harangues of politicians recently made in North Carolina and elsewhere in the South. They are unjust to the negro, and are not in accord with the thought of the best and wisest white men of that section. The question has merits, which, when presented in a dispassionate and dignified manner, will command a hearing, even from the negroes themselves, many of whom have said, "The measure is just; we do not need the franchise; we need that help that will fit us for its exercise." I have no sympathy for the man who needlessly abuses the negro. Every wrong the negro has perpetrated in the South is due to the short-sightedness of his supposed white friend. His record during slavery proves this. A correctly taught negro will take charge of the virtue and the wealth of your family, and neither will be molested. Ten thousand Southern white men will testify to the truth of this statement. The Spanish-American war incidentally emphasizes the wisdom of the Virginia resolution in 1861 in petitioning that no member of the African race be allowed to hold office. The incident of a negro officer in the volunteer army of the late war, reminding a private white soldier of "the duty of inferiors to salute their superiors," to which the white soldier replied, "All coons look alike to me," while humorous, is significant. The significance is deepened when we remember that the reply was not made by a Southern man. It means that a negro cannot be put in authority over a white man anywhere in these United States, and the negro's life



be safe. In the regular army, whatever good word may be said for the negro is due to the fact that in the regular army the negro is practically in slavery, and when managed properly, his equal for service is not easily found. But in the volunteer army, the Northern white volunteer saw the negro in all his insolence, and the most insolent being on earth is a negro in the paraphernalia of office, without the instincts of a gentleman or the qualifications of an officer. These Northern white volunteers have done more than all the newspapers published since the war in giving a correct estimate of the negro as a race, and they have taken this information to every State of the Union. The horrible crimes committed in the South in the way of killing innocent government officers, is due to feeling kindled by negro insolence at first, and has been fed until the drapery of office will render obnoxious the best negro in the land to many of the lower class of whites. I frankly admit that this is unjust; at the same time, I wish to declare that this condition is due to lack of judgment on the part of the government, in trying to force an inferior race to the place of rule over a superior race, when it is unfitted by inheritance and training, and lacking in merit for such position. When we remember the tremendous effort to arouse this country against slavery, and recollect that slavery went down in one of the bloodiest wars of the world, it is not strange that the North should have erroneous views of the negro race, and exaggerated ideas of his sufferings and wrongs, nor is it even surprising that the North glorified and deified the negro: but the time for visions is past, and the time of soberness is at hand. With purity of heart, sincerity of purpose, and soundness of mind, the South says the wrong to the white and the wrong to the negro will never be righted until the negro is relieved of the burden of responsibilities for which, as a race, he is unqualified. I could name several hundred negroes, in every way as well qualified for office and citizenship as the late Fred. Douglas, who, if they should ask my opinion of the attitude they should assume in this hour of the negro race's life, I should unhesitatingly say, "Re-

nounce your own right of emancipation for the sake of your race, which is unripe for emancipation."

#### THE CONDITION NOW.

Under present conditions I wish to discuss, first, lynching. I ask you to consider carefully these words from Hon. L. E. Bleckley, Chief Justice of Georgia: "A fundamental truth which certainly exists, and which ought to be recognized by all men everywhere, is that, according to right reason and just views of civilization, government and morals, provocation has nothing whatever to do with the right or wrong of lynching negroes. No kind or degree of provocation will justify or even mitigate it. Lynching is barbaric, anarchic and wrong per se."

I ask you to consider the following from the late Bishop Atticus G. Haygood, of the Southern Methodist Church:

"In a country unorganized and without government, individuals must punish violations of natural law; theirs is no other recourse. But this is not civilization; it is at best barbarism. In organized society, lynching is a crime against society. It is not a question of what the victim deserves; it is a question as to what society can afford. In organized society there is no higher civil or social duty than obedience to law; the lyncher is, of all men, the violator of law. Lynching is a crime against God and man. Lynching breaks the law, defies it, despises it, puts it to open shame. Punishment by government, according to law, represents the judgment of God; punishment by lynching is vengeance. Legal punishment educates men into respect for law; lynching educates them into contempt for law. Lynching does more to put down law than any criminal it takes in hand; lynching kills a man; the lyncher kills the law that protects life; lynching is anarchy."

There is no mistaking the meaning of these words, they describe the thought of all good men in the South, in regard to lynching. But we are trying to arrive at a conclusion by the way of facts. What are the facts? Legal punishment has been tried, yet the crime of rape increased. Shoot-

ing and hanging, without law, has been tried, yet the crime increased. Finally, mutilation and fire have been tried, and still the crime increases. Dr. E. E. Hoss, editor of the *Christian Advocate* published at Nashville, Tenn., in 1893, in an editorial article said, "Three hundred white women have been raped by negroes within the preceding three months."

Bishop Haygood further said, "I have been asked to explain the burning of negroes, not the killing of them. I give frankly my opinion; the people who burned them were for the time insane." Mr. Walter Page pooh-pooh's this idea, and undertakes to account for it by the "Southern Bully." I concur in Bishop Haygood's opinion, and I wish to describe three cases of lynching of which I was eye-witness.

I happened to be traveling in Texas the year the negro was burned of whom Bishop Haygood was asked to give his opinion on the manner of his death. It was in Paris, Texas. The mob assembled after the manner of all mobs; it looked like a crowd of curiosity seekers, while it was being ascertained if the right man had been apprehended. When this had been settled, resolution and determination took possession of the last man of them; the pile was prepared and the negro laid thereon; nothing but death could have stopped them; they were insane. The crime was this:

A big, burly negro had taken an innocent child, of a few years of age, and after trying to accomplish his purpose, had literally torn her limbs apart. In arguing the cause as insanity, Bishop Haygood says, "Had the dismembered form of his victim been the dishonored body of my baby, I might have gone into an insanity that might have ended never."

The next case was at Nashville, Tenn. Two young ladies living with a widowed mother, in a small hamlet not far from Nashville, had been outraged and gagged by a negro brute, afflicted at the time with a nameless disease. He was apprehended and lodged in jail in the city of Nashville. Farmers mounted on every kind and description of animals,

came into the city in great numbers, broke into the jail in broad daylight, took the negro to the foot-bridge spanning the Cumberland River, and hanged him thereon; then stood for half an hour and riddled his body with bullets. I was crossing the river in a canoe at the time, and my attention was attracted by the shooting; from where I was, so much lead being wasted on a man already dead, looked very insane.

In Bowling Green, Ky., some time between '94 and '96, a beautiful young lady of that section had been outraged by a negro. He was caught. The people controlled themselves long enough for a trial by law to begin, when, to my utter amazement, two hundred and fifty men, with Winchester rifles, marched to the courthouse at high noon, and took the prisoner from before the face of the Judge and hanged him by the neck until he was dead. If you can give any explanation for such conduct, other than insanity, I submit the case.

My fellow-citizens, the exasperations have been cumulative, as in continued doses of digitalis, and the effect has been insanity. As much as I condemn lynching—and I say it is the most damnable practice any civilized man can join in—and realizing as I do the awful consequences of not speaking soberly, in the fear of God and man, on this fearful subject, yet I must say it, and I say it deliberately—the cure for lynching is the stopping of rape. Unless assaults by negroes on white women and little girls come to an end, there will most probably be still further displays of vengeance that will shock the world. The law should take its course. Provocation cannot set aside law with impunity, but the difficulty contended with is the determination of the Southern white man that women shall not be dragged into court to testify in such cases.

#### REMEDY.

When this government decides to stop trading in negro votes and takes from him the right of suffrage, on the ground that a citizen that curses his race with such crimes

as his, is unworthy of its exercise, a step will be taken towards putting an end to rape, and the elevation of the negro, more advanced and promising than all the essays and papers and speeches ever delivered on the social and political status of the negro race since rape began. I say it, here and now, the negro must be controlled, for his own good, as well as for the safety of society. Bishop Haygood said he remembered to have heard of only one case of rape in all his life, while the negro was a slave, and he was burned. His disfranchisement by the Southern States will not affect his interests, social, business, moral, religious, or educational.

#### SOCIAL.

Sociology may one day be worthy of the dignified name of Science, and may be able to point out the way, by which, the clash between the classes can be avoided, but it will never devise a way of fulfilling the ideas of many intelligent Northern whites regarding the social position of the negro. There is a barrier, in the race itself, that prevents anything like an approach to social equality in the South. Not riding in the same railroad coach, stopping at the same hotel, going to the same school, worshipping in the same church, sociology may point out, but will never be able to remedy. When these things are so, why dream of a social position for the negro that would indicate the high plane of companionship? The mere fact that a Northern man will ask the question, "Why?" makes a Southern man despair of undertaking to tell him. To a Southerner it is like an intuitive truth, to be accepted through its own power of assertion; to a Northerner it is like the Gospel, to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Greek foolishness, and likewise, not unlike the Gospel, when once accepted; by living among the negro race, it creates such a zeal that the Southern friend has to keep the Northern friend from killing his once idolized pet. When a man like Joseph Cook, can even hint at amalgamation one is tempted to give up the task of presenting the social side of life as it must be observed by the negroes of the South.



I wish to produce the impression that the suggestion has never yet been made, nor the plan devised, by which whites and negroes can live together in the same section of the South, save as negroes and whites, in the sense that the Southern white man understands these distinctions ; which is identically that of oil and water, and as there is no law of chemistry that can force these fluids to be one, so there is no law of God or man that can force the white man of the South to sit down at the same table with the negro and say we are one. What God has joined together let not man put asunder ; the converse of this likewise must be obeyed. What God has put asunder let no man or government join together, for in the union is the death of the inferior.

If I have made myself clear, I wish now to state what will appear strange to any one unfamiliar with Southern life. While a Southern man will not associate with as an equal, nor permit his family to admit to his home as a guest, the most refined, best educated, wealthiest, most honored negro on earth, he will advise with, give all the privacy of his home life to, sit down by the side of in a railroad coach, let his children sleep in the same room with and let his wife take with her into the finest parlor car, or into the best hotel, any decent negro woman, provided she is, in every case, considered simply as a negress in the employ of her superior; or to change the picture, he will trade with, sell to, buy from, employ for work, or work for, any decent negro man, provided it is understood that he is a negro with no claims of equality with his white superior.

Not long since a negro, here in the North, wrote for one of the magazines an article, in which he created a condition of affairs which he said, by inference, existed in the South, and located the scene at Fayetteville, North Carolina. He undertook to show that prejudice was so great against the negro, that a young negro girl who loved her former mistress, was denied the privilege of looking upon her dead face, was kept from the church at the time of her funeral, and prohibited from entering the cemetery at the time of her burial, and so gave a bunch of flowers to a little

dog who placed them on the newly-made mound. Doubtless some tender-hearted Northern white has wept over this story, not stopping to think how such a cruel race could ever have so won the affection of this negress. The editor of the *Presbyterian Standard*, published at Charlotte, N. C., replied to this piece of idiocy, by saying: "The first funeral preached on my assuming a pastorate at Fayetteville, was that of an honored negro woman, and it was preached in the church of the white people; the main body of the church was reserved for the negroes, while the whites occupied the sides and galleries. The undertaker of the town was a respected negro and officiated at the funeral of every white citizen, and entered the cemetery on all funeral occasions. This negro was respected as much as any white man living in the town."

I have given this incident to illustrate my meaning. If this negro undertaker had assumed the air of an equal, or, in any way, showed that he regarded his office as breaking down the social barriers, the people of Fayetteville would have let the bodies of their loved ones rot in the sun and have left their bleached bones as a testimony to the impossibility of any such thing as social equality between the white and negro races.

To make the paradox more apparent, the negro may be placed in the finest drug store in the South, with every assistant a negro, and provided they are competent, the finest families will have prescriptions filled by them, and the most refined and elegantly dressed ladies will be served by them at soda fountains, and ice cream tables, provided they conduct the business as negroes. but if the store is to be run on the ground of equality of race, if plague was raging and drugs could be procured nowhere else, the white people of the South would die, rather than receive at a negro's hand the remedy for death, if social equality was thereby to be conceded. You say that is fool-hearted; be it so, it is nevertheless true. There is no enterprise or business in the South, for which a negro is competent, that is not open to him, as a negro. There is nothing in the South

for the negro but death, if he demands it, or his Northern white friends demand it for him, otherwise than as the Southern white man understands "as a negro" to mean.

To put the case plainer still—a leading Southern preacher told me he was put to utter confusion, when a boy, while on a visit to relatives in New Jersey. He was Southern born. A negro, whom he called Tom, was servant to the family he was visiting. Proposing to go fishing one day, Tom, negro like, offered to dig the bait and row the boat for the privilege of accompanying his white companion. Nothing suited a Southern white boy better than this, and an agreement was quickly reached. When they returned from fishing, where they had both sat on the same log, ate out of the same lunch basket, smoked the same pipe, to his utter amazement his relatives upbraided him for going fishing with a servant. When the boy recalled, that against his training and will, he had been compelled to attend church and sit together in the same Sunday-school class with this negro, the censure for going fishing with him produced such a mental impression that to this day, though advancing in life, he has never recovered from it. The fact is, the conditions were so completely reversed that his boyish mind could not take it in. We in the South will do anything to help negroes as negroes, but if they arrogate to themselves equality of race, that moment life is jeopardized. There is a boundary beyond which he cannot pass.

#### EDUCATION.

I have often been asked by intelligent Northern white men: "Does education benefit the negro." To which I give two answers. The first is after the manner of reply made by preachers, when asked if education helps a bad man; to which they reply, especially if they happen to be arguing for a church school, that without religion it enables him to be a more effective bad man. Education undoubtedly strengthens the mental faculties of negroes as well as of whites. But you will observe that the question is one of benefit; in its answer we must be guided by his

circumstances. The only thing gotten from the present system of negro schools, that sticks to the pupil throughout life, is an intense hatred for the white race, and false ideals of life. This is due to having negro teachers. Considering that the present generation of younger whites have little of that love and affection for the negro which marked the older generations, education is not beneficial, under these conditions, if both races are to dwell together.

The other answer is: If the younger negroes will take their places in a school distinctively for negroes, save only that they shall be directed by white talent, and the negro will lay aside all ideas of education being able to pull down the barriers between him and his white teacher, then education will broaden and elevate the negro to a fitness for citizenship and suffrage. The Southern white who does not admit this latter, is blinded by prejudice, and the Northern white who undertakes to contradict the former, either does not, or will not, understand the situation. The negro's lack of virtue, of honesty, of filial affection, of cleanliness, and likewise his tendency to revert to savagery, his lack of self-control, when fired by passion that leads to such death-invoking deeds as rape, have been, and will still be, affected by education when wisely directed. No money is wasted when spent by the State or the Nation for the better education of the negro race.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL STATUS.

It would seem that here, if nowhere else, with the declaration "that of one blood God has made all peoples that dwell upon the face of the earth," and that "with Him there is no respect of persons," the Southern white man would sit down by the side of his brother in black as an equal in every respect; but it is a fact that he will not—and the fact is what we wish explained—the Southern white distinguishes between the rights of a soul and the rights of a citizen. He knows that in God's sight a negro's soul is as good as his, that none of the benefits of grace which accrue to him may not likewise accrue to the negro; but he knows on the other hand, it is not a violation of any New Testa-

ment principle for him to recognize, in his worship, those distinctions of race, which God has made, and the observance of which is for the interest of good order, good government, the good of the negro and the safety of the body politic. If suffrage had not created such a relationship between the races, as it has, involving the social status of the white race, the old custom of parts of churches, for whites, being set aside for negroes, where, under the same preaching, they might worship God and join in communion at a common table, spread for a sin-cursed earth, might still prevail; but there will never be a church, in the South, of any denomination, that will allow negroes in its courts or within its walls as equals so long as the race question is involved. I give you the fact—ecclesiastics may argue it in what manner and in what way they please. But in the vernacular of Sam Jones, "When you meet a *fact* in the middle of the road, you might as well hitch your horse, get down and take out your lunch."

My friends, we might as well face the condition: It is not in the power of refinement, education, wealth, honor or title to break down the barrier between the negro and white races in the South. The measure that undertakes so to do is incapable of being carried out by the strongest government on earth.

I wish to say, the proposed methods of dealing with the franchise in the South will in no way be detrimental to the negro; his very best interest will be conserved thereby; and we who know the conditions, tell you, in the fear of God and man, that we believe a few years of trial will convince the negro of the good of the measure, and convince the world of the righteousness of the act.

The city of the South in which I live, contains about 30,000 people. It is the capital of Mecklenburg county, and the total population of the county is about 65,000. Of this population, about two-fifths are colored. The city is one of considerable activity, and in its population it counts many Northern men, who are respected and influential in the community.



In the suburbs of this city is located Biddle University, a large and flourishing Presbyterian College and Seminary for the colored race, in which colored men largely are teachers. This Institution is supported by the General Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church. There the colored folk are contented, happy and prosperous.

In the government of this city, the colored men take no part. We have not now, nor have we had for many years, any policeman or other officers connected with the city government except of the white race.

In the government of the county no colored man takes any part whatever. He does not sit on the jury, and members of his race, when charged with criminal offenses, are tried by a jury of the white race; and, if the property rights of any colored man are in jeopardy, men of the white race exclusively determine what his rights are.

In this city and county, where the government, by tacit consent, has assumed this phase, colored men being excluded from any participation therein, the rights of the colored man have, as I have been informed, always been, and are now, most safely guarded. His rights of property; his rights of person; the safety of his family, the sanctity of his home are as well protected in that county and in that city, as the rights, property and home of any white citizen. The colored man is there the absolute equal of the white man before the law. He is not his equal socially. He is not allowed the hope to be his equal socially. He has learned that neither the Southern man nor the Northern man, who has come to dwell amongst us, desires or will permit his domination in any governmental affairs, but he knows well that his rights are safe in every particular, and he is never discontented and never disturbed except when bad men, for their own selfish purposes, work upon his prejudices and ignorance, and either buy his vote for money, or else excite his passions and his fears by falsehood, in the hope that, with the assistance of the ignorant colored vote, men who could not otherwise hope to gain office may

succeed, by such means, in accomplishing their wicked purposes.

If any man in this audience desires to know how white men and colored men live together in peace and amity under these circumstances, I invite him to come to the community where I live, and I will introduce him to men who, but a few years ago, were ignorant of the Southern ways and Southern ideas upon this subject, but who have learned, by close contact with our people, that we are not only merciful and kind to the black man, but that we are, what is better for him and for us, absolutely just towards him and his.

The white men of the South say to the colored race, in all kindness, "You shall not govern us," and, in the same breath, they say to that race, "Our government of you shall be kindly and just."

In the Hawaiian policy, already adopted by the government, there has been a refusal to extend the franchise on account of race. The color line, in this instance, has been the governing principle, and a line has been drawn at blacks, browns and yellows. This measure is eminently wise and will save the government great trouble in future.

The silence of the Republican party on the Porto Rico and the Philippine question, as forecast in the platform indicated by Mr. Hanna, is very significant. Its significance will save both the party and the government a criticism of inconsistency.

The expansion plank in the Massachusetts platform is worthy of study by those who like to observe a high political somersault. It has taken the Republican party 35 years to make the turn, but here it is, down on both feet with its face where the back of its head was.

"By the Treaty of Paris, a number of islands formerly held by Spain have come under the dominion of the United States, and by the terms of the treaty the duty of providing for their government and of determining the civil rights and political status of their inhabitants has devolved upon the Congress of the United States. As a result of these acquisitions, races of people have come under the protection of the American flag who have been so long degraded by tyranny as to have very inade-

quate conceptions of the true spirit of liberty and of the responsibilities of self-government, and who have been so impoverished and weakened by the exploitations of their oppressors as to be unable to defend themselves, unaided, from the greed of foreign conquest.

“No greater trust than the uplifting and educating of these defenceless people has ever been imposed upon the United States. The Republican party believes it to be the high and solemn duty of the nation to accept and execute this trust, with all the responsibilities it involves, by retaining the islands, and by providing for their adequate government upon the principles of liberty and humanity. It believes that to abandon them to local anarchy or to the lust of the invader would be cowardly and dishonorable, and a betrayal of its trust, impossible to be contemplated by a great, free and enlightened nation.”

The measure proposed would be admirably suited to meet the requirements of all wants in the Union. The South, in the effort now being made in the attempt to amend the several constitutions of the States, looks to no better attainment for that section than this paragraph from the above forecast of the Republican platform.

It is a curious fact that in the government's effort to alleviate human suffering, in the only war in the history of the world which was fought solely for the relief of the oppressed, it has hit upon a difficulty, the solution of which brings to the front the mistakes made by the Republican party 35 years ago. Whether we will or not, the race question in this country has assumed such proportions that it will not down. It would be very embarrassing to the Chief Executive and to the Federal Government to have the Constitution of these United States guaranteeing certain rights to, and keeping certain privileges from, those of her citizens dwelling in the isles of the sea and yet under the protection of the American flag, and at the same time having in her very bosom all rights guaranteed to, and no privileges excluded from, the race, in many particulars, more vicious and as incompetent for the exercise of the franchise as the brown and yellow-skins of the Hawaiian group.

In concluding the discussion on this great subject, we are confronted by a fact; and that fact is the citizens of one part of this Union ask you to deal as fairly and as sincerely

by them, as the whole Union is dealt with, when you consider the inabilities of the citizens in newly acquired territory.

The old question when Mexico and Upper California were admitted to the Union, is now before us. That question was: "Shall the new territory be free or slave soil? The question now is changed only to this extent: "Shall all of the new citizens have the right of franchise, or only those competent to use it?" The government has answered, on the ground of expediency, that the franchise shall not be extended to those incompetent for its intelligent exercise. We ask for nothing more. Either way, if the government is to be consistent, the 15th Amendment of the Federal Constitution must be stricken from that document. If this shall be done friction is at an end, and the negro race may eventually give to this country a sturdy, intelligent citizen.

Charlotte, N. C.

JOHN W. STAGG.