

# **The Curse of Race Prejudice**

James F. Morton Jr.

1906

# Contents

INTRODUCTORY.	3
<b>The Curse of Race Prejudice.</b>	<b>5</b>
CHAPTER I. WHAT IS RACE PREJUDICE?	6
CHAPTER II. THE LESSON OF HISTORY.	9
CHAPTER III. THE FRUITS OF RACE PREJUDICE.	13
CHAPTER IV. THE FANATICAL SILLINESS OF RACE PREJUDICE.	24
CHAPTER V. SOME ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND RACE PREJUDICE.	35
CHAPTER VI. THE BUGBEAR OF SOCIAL EQUALITY.	47
CHAPTER VII. THE HIGHER IDEAL.	51

# INTRODUCTORY.

“Of the word I have spoken, I except none; red, white, black, all are deific; In each house is the ovum; it comes forth after a thousand years.”

Walt Whitman: Faces.

The present pamphlet, while largely based on a lecture delivered under the same title in the Alhambra Theater in New York City, will be found to differ from it in some material respects. The special aim of that address, while keeping in view the fundamental principles as herein set forth, was to voice an earnest protest against the anti-Semitic outrages in Russia, and to point out the fact that these horrors, which have caused the whole civilized world to stand aghast, are but the logical result of the cultivation of racial antipathies. In this argument, most of the illustrations are drawn from nearer home, and especially from the manifestations of Negrophobia which are the peculiar disgrace of our own country. This is not because the Negro is a race apart, demanding special consideration. The writer has no extraordinary predilection for this particular race, and is in no way fanatical on the subject. A protest against Negrophobia is by no means a eulogy of Negromania. These pages are simply the result of a deeply rooted conviction, founded on no small degree of study, investigation, experience and close intermingling with members of almost every conceivable race, under manifold conditions, that the spirit of racial separateness, merging swiftly into race arrogance and race hatred, is not merely indefensible in the extremest degree in its cruel injustice to weaker or less developed races, but a blighting curse to the dominant race itself; and that a highly advanced civilization is maintainable only on condition of weeding out from the minds of its constituent members every trace of this debasing mental poison. To all fair-minded people, the arguments in support of this thesis are respectfully commended. It is a poor cause that dares not face the light. No matter how positive our convictions, the wisest of us falls many degrees short of infallibility ; and new light from any source is always to be welcomed by the honest searcher for truth—to whom alone these pages are dedicated. An attempt will be made to rest the contention entirely on the basis of reason, avoiding mere appeals to passion, and restraining within as narrow limits as possible, even the expression of legitimate indignation at recorded outrages on human rights. The reader is urged to take nothing for granted, and to reject any assertions that are not abundantly confirmed by fact and logic. Let us reason together, with an eye single to the discovery of truth.

Among the purposes of this treatise, especial attention may be called to the effort which will be made to examine the essential characteristics of the human frailty known as race prejudice, and to trace it at least roughly to its origin; to indicate its influence in the decay of nations, and its deteriorating effect on individuals: to exhibit its fruits, as betraying the character of the tree whence they spring; to appeal to common sense against the bogey-worship which manifests itself in puerile fears and acts of worse than childish folly; to face squarely all the current attempts to defend or palliate this great evil, and to meet every ostensible argument in behalf of race prejudice by an overwhelming refutation; and to establish the fundamental conditions of human

progress, and point out their irreconcilability with an indulgence in so demoralizing a superstition. All this is undertaken with the best of good will toward those who hold an opposite point of view, and in the hope that some, at least, of them may prove open to conviction. The writer has no animosity toward the South, in spite of the necessity of pointing out some unpleasant consequences of its prevailing sentiment, which is created by the nature of the argument. The question is not one of sections, but of principles. To the honor of the South, many of her noblest and most thoughtful sons and daughters, in spite of the difficulty of resisting the pressure of an adverse public opinion, are rapidly becoming emancipated from the crude prejudices of an earlier epoch, and are coming to recognize the broader claims of humanity. The Vardamans, Tillmans and Watsons<sup>1</sup> are rapidly becoming repudiated by those who know them best; and to assume that such as these represent the new South, or, *a fortiori*, to brand the South of the future with the record of these dishonored names, were a gratuitous and wanton insult. No such injustice will here be inflicted on the honorable men and women who are gradually lifting the whole of the fair South into a progressive civilization worthy of the manifold blessings with which nature has so lavishly endowed her. But it is the truest friendship to point out the destruction which lies at the end of the path of error, and to utter an earnest warning against the disastrous consequences of honest delusion. Frankness is not hostility; and the flatterer of a people's vices is not its best friend. The Vardamans and the murderous lynching mobs do not stand as effects without a cause. If the disease is to be cured, it must be carefully studied, even though some painful probing of an old sore may thereby become necessary. To the dishonor of the North, she cannot escape responsibility; nor has she ground for proudly drawing her skirts about her, and exclaiming: "I am holier than thou." Race riots and lynchings of the most fiendish type have of late years been portentously frequent north of Mason and Dixon's line. The shameful Chinophobia of the Pacific slope is too well known to be disputed; while an anti-Semitism, less virulent in its manifestations, but no less irrational and contemptible in its essence, is disgracefully common in our northern cities. The issue is not between South and North, or between Russia and the rest of the world. It is between decay and progress in social life. The person whose opinions are based solely on the current sentiment of his birthplace or domicile is but a poor specimen of humanity. There is not one truth for Massachusetts and another for South Carolina. The people of Georgia are subject to the same arithmetical rules as those of Ohio; nor is astronomy one thing in New York and a very different science in Virginia. Similarly, sociological and ethical principles are not determinable along geographical lines; and only the shallowest and most servile of reasoners can imagine that "loyalty" to their native state or section requires that they shut their eyes to universal truth, and accept blindly any prejudices or superstitions which may be prevalent in the particular locality. To such only as combine intelligence and independence of thought with honesty of purpose, can the following pages be expected to appeal.

---

<sup>1</sup> James K. Vardaman was then governor of Mississippi, Benjamin Tillman governor of South Carolina, Thomas Watson governor of Georgia, all white supremacists and advocates of lynching—Louise Crowley Library

# **The Curse of Race Prejudice.**

# CHAPTER I. WHAT IS RACE PREJUDICE?

“Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons. subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?”

William Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice.

A clear knowledge of the nature of the subject with which we have to deal is essential to us, if we would arrive at definite and unassailable conclusions. Many of the fiercest intellectual battles of the world have been fought over definitions. Let us therefore determine, first of all, just what is signified by the term “race prejudice.” It will not do to start with a *petitio principii*. Before race prejudice can be intelligently attacked or defended, its existence must be demonstrated. What does the ordinary speaker or writer mean by prejudice? Is it not the maintenance of an opinion, or the encouragement of an emotion, of which the awakened and unbiased intellect is logically compelled to disapprove? The prejudiced man is he who prefers something else to truth, who forms his opinion in advance of due inquiry, and refuses to give a patient investigation to the claims of the view opposed to that to which he has committed himself. Each of us finds it difficult to root out all prejudice from the mind, although few will dispute the abstract proposition that the highest type of mind is that which succeeds in eliminating from itself all preconceptions, and in examining all subjects from the standpoint of pure reason, and in the light of all the pertinent facts which can be made accessible. The tendency of social progress is toward a reduction of the number of prejudices; while a converse movement is necessarily in the direction of social degeneracy. If, therefore, the unbending facts of ethnology, history, biology, psychology and such other departments of knowledge as may be laid under contribution in the study of the relative values of the different races, tend inexorably to the conclusion that the human race is one in all essential characteristics, and that no race can claim a permanent superiority over others, or justly be doomed to a condition of permanent inferiority, the charge of wilful prejudice must be granted to be legitimately brought against those who deliberately shut their eyes to the proven facts of science and the permanent records of history, and seek to fan the flames of a barbarous race hatred, or to feed an already excessive vanity, with pretences of an inherent right to domineer over their brothers of a darker hue or an alien tongue or creed. Sooner or later, the tribunal of the future will pass on such overweening claims. In the mean time, it is the task of sane minds to sift the truth from the error, and to uphold only those conclusions which can be demonstrated to be well founded.

Race prejudice is an attitude of mind which precludes the exercise of reason. It lifts up its voice only to rave. It is no new phenomenon, but as old as human folly, of which it is so conspicuous an example. Being wholly emotional, it expresses itself mainly by means of hysterical ejaculations. Its fruits, as will later be seen, range from burlesque fears of imaginary contamination to the foulest massacres that have stained the pages of history. It is the offshoot of so obviously childish

a vanity that the one amazing fact in the whole controversy is to find it seriously defended by any civilized man. It is simply an extension of the subconscious feeling of the average man that the whole universe revolves around him, and was created for his especial benefit. Podsnappery is but a phase of this abnormal conceit. The existence of race prejudice among presumably civilized peoples is a lamentable demonstration of the general deficiency of mental training. The intense prejudice against the Jew in Russia, the Negro in one part of America, the Indian in another and the Chinaman in still another, is merely an exaggeration of the jingo patriotism which renders the braggarts of every nation the object of pitying contempt by the equally boastful patriots of every other nation. The average man of any country is firmly persuaded, first, that he belongs to the highest race on the planet; next, that his particular country is the best and most glorious in the world; and finally, that the class or caste to which he belongs is the most important and indispensable in society; and these various forms of conceit are sedulously fostered by association with those as possessed of them as himself. As to the planet itself, he practically regards it as the centre of the universe, to which the entire starry host is merely tributary; and the primitive religions of the world naively reflect this state of mind, entirely excusable in a pre-scientific age. It is impossible to reason with a mere expression of overgrown vanity. Try to discuss obvious facts with a jingo patriot—French, German, Briton, American or Feejee Islander—and see how much satisfaction you get out of it. We count as a proof of backward civilization the Chinaman's naive hatred of "foreign devils," without showing a bit more rationality ourselves.

If racial conceit is universal, no less so is the body of human experience which proves it to be ill founded. The various nations of the earth are all by turns despisers and despised. At what stage of its history are we to pronounce with certainty on the status of a race? In the plenitude of its power, the signs of decadence are beyond human discernment. In the day of its fall, no man can predict that it will not rise again, purged of its elements of deterioration, to even greater heights than of old. The dominant race of one epoch is the subject race of a later generation; and many a people, scorned as hopelessly inferior, has proved its inherent worth by deeds at which history has marvelled. Where was the Anglo Saxon race in the days of Caesar? Who could have dreamed that the wretched savages whom Rome bent to its sway would today stand in the foreground of a grander civilization than the past had ever known? Who, without the gift of omniscience, dares pronounce any race permanently inferior to any other? If such inferiority exists, only the entire future history of the race can establish it as a fact; and the antecedent improbability is overwhelmingly great. Such a fact would be indeed anomalous, opposed to scientific probability, and out of harmony with the entire past development of the race. Until some better evidence for so wild a belief is furnished, than that which is now at our disposal, we shall find our own interest, as well as that of our less developed kindred, promoted by giving the suspected race the benefit of the doubt, thus giving food for the ambition to reach a state of greater excellence, and encouraging the possible germ of development. The heartlessness which would close the door of hope to the aspiring individuals of a slowly evolving race, is so contrary to the most elementary principles of justice, as to deserve the most unsparing condemnation.

That the prejudices against special races are purely local, is another significant indication of their entire irrationality. The Russian abhors the Jew; but the mere color of skin does not make the Negro repulsive to him. The Californian is ready to accept the Jew as a brother; but the "Heathen Chineese" is to him the sum of all evils. The cowboy of the plains sees no particular harm in the Mongolian: but he is firmly persuaded that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian." The Southerner is willing to admit that the Jew, the Chinaman and the Indian all have excellent qualities, and

that association with them brings no special degradation; but he foams at the mouth at the bare thought of recognizing the Negro as a human being with equal capacity for development with himself. The cosmopolitan, on the other hand, of whatever nationality, possessed of equal culture and as fine sensibilities as any of the foregoing factors in our civilization, mingles freely and on equal terms with members of all the despised and pro-scribed races, and finds himself neither degraded nor contaminated thereby. Wherefore, he must needs conclude that these sectional dislikes have no relation to any truth in nature, but are the mere product of irrational prejudices. One fact, however, is significant in the highest degree, and cannot be too strongly emphasized. The deepest and most intense prejudices felt by one race against another are to be found on the part of those who have inflicted, in their own persons or those of their ancestors, the most cruel wrongs on the race they most affect to despise. This is in accordance with a well known fact in human nature, and plays a larger part in accentuating race prejudice than is commonly realized. It is not too much to say that race prejudice is a *prima facie* confession of guilt.



## CHAPTER II. THE LESSON OF HISTORY.

“For all unnatural relations curse Him most who seeks to profit most thereby. Therefore the man who wrongs his fellow, wrongs His own departing manhood most of all.”

Thomas Lake Harris: A Lyric of the Golden Age.

As has been said, race prejudice is older than recorded history. It is one of the hasty generalizations pardonable in primitive man, and blameworthy only, in those who have had larger facilities for observation and deduction. When the normal state of man was universal intertribal war, scarcely broken by occasional truce, no cosmopolitan spirit was possible. No man could be safe at any time, except in the heart of his own tribe. In this condition of general hostility, loyalty to the tribe involved hatred of all other tribes. Each victory intensified a sense of tribal superiority, accompanied by contempt for the vanquished foe; each defeat begot a wild desire for vengeance, and increased the already existing hatred. No common basis for international agreements had yet become possible; and the alien was of necessity the enemy. Religion, in its turn, played no mean part in fanning the flames of this barbaric jingoism. Each tribe boasted its own deities, and insisted on their superiority to the gods of other tribes. Each, thus traditionally taught to esteem itself the chosen people of some superior power, became arrogant and intolerant of the claims of others. With many, early traditions of a special divine descent for the tribe added to the sense of superior greatness. The less favored races must of necessity be composed of inferior beings, the destruction or enslavement of whom might be reckoned as good service in the eyes of the presiding divinity of the “chosen people.” The Jewish traditions, as embalmed in their ancient literature, are full of instruction on this point. The worshippers of Baal, Yahweh, Dagon, Chemosh and the other tribal gods are represented as actuated by identical motives, and rendered fanatical by similar delusions. Those sanguinary deities, each promising complete victory to its favorites, demand nothing short of the utter extermination of the foreigner. So far is religion, at this period, divorced from morality, that acts of common mercy and humanity are set down as crimes, arousing the displeasure of the higher powers. (See Deut. xx:10–17; I. Sam., xv; I. Kings xx:31–43; and countless other passages.) Yet the Semitish tribes must be considered, at this period, to have reached an advanced stage of barbarism, verging, at least, on semi-civilization. No student of psychology needs to be reminded of the persistence of a traditional point of view, long after the causes which gave birth to it have ceased to be operative, and have become forgotten. As civilization progressed, and tribes grew into nations, the more extreme forms of international hatred became materially softened. But the complete rooting out of a sentiment so long entertained, and once so necessary to tribal preservation, could be expected only of a highly evolved civilization. As means of communication between the different races of mankind have become perfected, and as science has overthrown the ancient superstitions with the whole group of immoral tribal deities, and has demonstrated the essential unity of the human race, intelligent minds have necessarily become emancipated from the ignorance in which race prejudice has its root. The only

excuse for longer entertaining this or other survivals of barbaric ages is the poor one of mental inertia. A little reflection, in the light of the facts now at the command of every reader, should render a prolonged discussion unnecessary. But close reasoning is even yet a scarce commodity among men. In spite of the most obvious demonstration, we somehow like to cling to the old, merely because it is old, and hug the foolish and anti-progressive delusion that we are in a sense disloyal to our ancestors, if we admit that they were in error on any point. The converse is of course the exact truth. We must honor the fathers by advancing from the ground reached by them. All progress comes through change and by means of abandonment of something formerly established; and when this process ceases, the work of the human race will be at an end. If we are not wiser than our sires, having their work to build on, we indeed dishonor them; and it will be a shame to us, if our children shall not far surpass ourselves in breadth of conception and loftiness of accomplishment.

Coming down from the barbaric period to more civilized times, we find the spirit of race prejudice, having been born of the primitive conditions roughly described above, especially persistent among the most powerful nations, although always present, in a greater or less degree, even among those races whose pride had been partly broken by repeated subjections to their stern conquerors. In the latter cases, a tradition of former supremacy and a dream of ultimate reinstatement and revenge were sufficient feeders of an otherwise unfounded vanity. Among such races as the Jews and the latter Druses, the hope of turning the tables was kept alive by the remembrance of ancient prophecies, which it was deemed blasphemy to question, betokening a certain day to come,

“When the slaves enslave; the oppressed ones o’er  
The oppressor triumph forevermore.”

If this were true of subject races, some of which still maintain a haughtiness toward the rest of the world which is ludicrously without even plausibility of justification, what wonder that the mightier powers, intoxicated by the greatness of their conquests and the vastness of the realms subjugated by them, should deem themselves the special favorites of Heaven, and should look with unutterable disdain on the alien peoples against whom fate had declared. The conqueror, flushed with the pride of victory, is not in a mood to make due allowance for the mutability of human affairs. We, however, are now able to look back on the record of mankind, and to see things in a more correct perspective, having done which, only an ordinary exercise of the intelligence is required to make the obvious application to our own time and our own people.

Let us read the lesson of the past. That portion of human history accessible to us covers but an insignificant part of man’s existence in large numbers on this planet. Short as the historical period is, however, it has been characterized by the successive dominance of several different races. And in every case, the dominant race was firmly convinced of its own inherent and permanent superiority, and was very sure that each of the others was several hundred years behind, and could never catch up. And how emphatically history has given the lie to all this national conceit! The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Persians, alike rioted in the luxuriance of power, and alike gazed with contempt on the struggling races below them. “Who are these insolent Athenians?” cried Darius, as much amazed at the presumption that could seek to thwart the monarch of the world, as enraged at the act of defiance which kindled rebellion in a corner of his vast dominions. Yet a few generations; and the same relentless law of nations which had led the mighty powers

of Chaldea and Egypt to bend to the sway of Persia, drove the successor and namesake of the mighty monarch to a wretched death in his unpitied flight from the Macedonian conqueror; and Persia, as a mighty and expanding power, became a mere name and a memory among nations. The later conquerors, from Tamerlane to Napoleon, exhibit the same arrogant contempt for the weaker races, before whom, nevertheless, in their own day or in that of their successors, their closely welded empires fall and are shattered.

Passing from mere military force to intellectual vigor, we may well study the history of the Greeks, whose surpassing mental powers are the marvel of us all. "Their culture," declares Professor Norton, "was as far superior to ours as ours is to that of the most ignorant Hottentot." How fared it with this noblest of races? Here, too, national vanity was found to be most intense. The term "barbarian" was that by which the Greeks knew and designated even the most learned and cultivated foreigner. Yet where and in what condition are the Greeks of today? The spirit that dwelt with them has utterly abandoned their degenerate children, and today has fled to the heirs of those same barbarians whose uncouthness and ignorance branded them in the eyes of the Greeks as creatures of a lower order, from whom nothing of value was to be expected. Equally exaggerated, and with apparently as good cause, was the pride of the Romans, in the days when "*Civis Romanus sum*" was a guarantee of protection and a badge of honor in the most remote regions of the then known world. What schoolboy has not mouthed the declaration attributed to Spartacus, wherein the giant gladiator, describing the death of his boyhood friend in the arena, and his vain plea for an honorable burial for one who had ever been noble and true, quotes the scornful and heartless reply of the praetor: "Let the carrion rot; there are no noble men but Romans." Spoken in seriousness today, would not these words appear the idlest mockery?

Instances of the same nature might be multiplied many times over. But enough has been cited to show that racial conceit is not the slightest evidence of superiority; and that where the superiority is actual, there is not the least warrant for assuming its permanence. The lowest race may rise; and the highest race may be brought low. Refutation of race prejudice does not bind us to an affirmation of the equal development of two given races at a definite point of time. Its end is fully accomplished by pointing to the fact that no race is safe in its fancied supremacy, and that there is no insurmountable obstacle or antecedent improbability to hinder any given race from so rapid progress, under favorable conditions of environment, as to place it in the front rank among the civilized races of the world. No man can predict the future of any race; and all long range prophecies have been falsified by the unexpected turns of social evolution. There is no doubt that today the Caucasian race, taking the average of achievements and of manifestations of intellectual strength and aesthetic culture, is decidedly in the ascendancy; but all human beings contain the germ of indefinite progress; and a slight relaxation of effort, due to satisfaction with what has already been achieved, may cause the white race to stand still, while some rival forges ahead. Already the Japanese are pressing the Indo-European nations hard in the pursuit of supremacy; and a Mongolian hegemony is among the not unreasonable possibilities of a future by no means remote. The unexpected decadence and equally unexpected emergence of races are among the inexplicable phenomena of history, and should at least teach modesty.

Still another point of vital importance must be made, before leaving the special domain of history. Not only does the record of nations demonstrate beyond a cavil the extreme superficiality and folly of race prejudice; but its pages are filled with evidence that indulgence in this pet vice is itself a prime factor in the decay of nations. Not with impunity can a nation believe a lie, and act upon it as if it were a truth. Where injustice exists between races, it is not only the subject

people which suffers. The dominant race wrongs itself even more deeply than its victim. This is no rhapsody, but a very practical historical fact, full of meaning to our own or any other nation. That this is fundamentally true, a brief reference to the facts already adduced will make clear. Each of the great powers which has had the opportunity of establishing itself, remained powerful as long as it realized that its mission was incomplete. With the loss of aspiration, came the loss of the elements which had made it great. Secure in its unassailable supremacy, it took no pains to study the progress of thought and discovery among its despised tributaries, but abandoned itself to unambitious ease, to be awakened by the "Mene mene, tekeli, upharsin," of the inexorable law of natural selection, which does not become inoperative because a particular individual or nation has lost its desire to go forward. This is shown in a most marked degree by the history of Persia, Greece and Rome. Natural law remains unchanged through all the eons of time; and the same influences which brought Rome beneath the feet of the barbarians she had despised too much to learn from them, are operative with equal force today and in America.

The condition of Asia today is as striking a proof as could be desired of the influence of race prejudice on the one hand, and escape from it on the other. Why is Japan the marvel of the modern world, while China remains the football of nations? The Chinese are a mighty people, with a wonderful past. They produced great philosophers, from whom we still have much to learn, before our ancestors had emerged from the lowest stages of barbarism. Many of the greatest inventions of modern times were known to them thousands of years ago. No possible cause can be assigned for the stationary condition in which they have now remained for centuries, except the national conceit which refuses to recognize that anything worth while remains to be learned, or that any lessons can be gleaned from the rest of mankind. As long as China despises other races as "foreign devils," she will stay in the rear; when she shakes off race prejudice, her turn may come to rise again. Japan has learned this one lesson, which makes all other lessons easier; and already, in nearly all fundamental respects, she is abreast of the most advanced nations of the world, if, indeed, she does not lead them in some most important particulars. Does the Caucasian race wish to stagnate with China, or to advance with Japan? The choice is plain; and the result is inevitable. "The Leopard's Spots" and "The Clansman" and similar appeals to the vicious elements of our race are written by Caucasians with Chinese minds; and the prevalence of their doctrines would destroy the progressive character of our civilization. Already we are too much honeycombed with race prejudice; and the evil effects are manifest to every careful observer.

That race prejudice not only destroys the impulse to progress by its opiate influence, but also inculcates positive and serious vices, will appear presently. That it renders its votaries blind to national dishonor, the signal instance of France in the conduct of the Dreyfus case, abundantly testifies. Its effect is invariably to coarsen, weaken, brutalize, and to render a people, lazy stupid and degenerate. Its champions may safely be defied to produce one historical instance in which racial arrogance and refusal to recognize kinship with a presumably inferior race, has produced one good result. As yet, they have never succeeded in doing so. Can a habit of mind, directly traceable to causes growing out of the necessities of savage warfare, and achieving no ends save those injurious to the race indulging in it, be logically classed as anything less than a vice of the most indefensible type?

## CHAPTER III. THE FRUITS OF RACE PREJUDICE.

“From thorns expect we grapes to gather?  
Shall figs the thistle fructify?  
Unhappy victims, crime-created, 'Tis your creator that should die!”

William A. Whittick: Lines.

Tried by the sure test of its uniform results, race prejudice is absolutely stripped of defence or palliation. Even among the human traits everywhere conceded to be of an evil character, there are but few to which may be traced so long a list of undeniable atrocities. Wherever the spirit of race hatred prevails, there is a marked tendency to crimes of violence. In the Southern and some of the Northern United States of America, the life of a Negro is held of almost as little account as that of a beast. Murder is not considered to be murder, when the victim is a member of the “inferior race.” A sentiment which makes the most atrocious of all crimes a trivial and even justifiable deed, can only be classed as degrading and infamous. The lyncher, North or South, is a human being sunk far below the level of the brute creation. Yet by an apparent contradiction, this inhuman ruffian, this monster exulting in torture and bloodshed, this most villainous criminal known to civilization, is found to be, in other relations of life, and in all matters where race hatred does not enter, honorable, gentle and kind. How can this Jekyll and Hyde existence be understood? Is it not evident that the real criminal is that monstrous hallucination which so distorts the entire mental fibre of the unhappy being it possesses, as for the time being to destroy every vestige of the moral sense? No man or woman who encourages even the mildest phases of race prejudice can wholly escape responsibility for the horrors at which every decent individual shudders.

A trifling incident within the experience of the writer will serve to illustrate the deteriorating influence of race prejudice and its inevitable transmutation in passing from the higher to the lower grades of culture and intelligence. Let it be well observed that the initial evil is in the false sentiment in its most refined and specious form; and that all which follows is but the logical sequence from cause to effect. All who cater to race prejudice are guilty of all the unspeakable horrors that flow from it. The episode above referred to occurred while the writer was spending a few days in the hop fields of western Washington, a few years ago, and must, for convenience, be related in the first person.

In the row next to mine, two girls of rather unrefined and noisy manners were discussing dancing, dress, flirtations and the few other topics within the scope of their intelligence, in tones which necessarily took all their neighbors into their confidence. Finally, one of them, whose name I will charitably suppress, a girl whose subsequent conversation revealed the fact that she came from Texas, introduced the subject of what she was vulgarly pleased to term “niggers.” In reporting the substance of her remarks, I will take the liberty of expurgating the frequent “My Gods” and “Gees,” which appropriately embellished it. “If any of” them should sass me, I

believe I'd kill 'em," was the first remark I heard from her on the subject. "They put on airs, as if they thought they were as good as anybody." (I am afraid I am improving on her grammar a little too much for a strictly accurate reporter). It developed that she, evidently belonging to the "poor whites," had occasionally been placed in charge of the small children belonging to an "old mammy" who was called away from home; and she related to her chum, with great gusto, how she hated these children, and always seized the opportunity to "lick" them, without the slightest cause or provocation. Then followed a gleeful account of her attitude toward the colored race in general, without the slightest hint on her part of any wrong done her by them. "I've pushed lots of 'em off the sidewalk into the mud, and spoiled their fine clothes," she bragged. "Once, there was a nigger woman all dressed up coming along; and the town marshal happened to be by, and says to me: 'If you'll push her off into the gutter, I'll see that she don't touch you for it.' So, when she comes up, I brushed against her, and gave her a shove. She tells me to quit: an' I say: 'I guess I've got a right to this sidewalk.' and give her a quick push that lands her right in the gutter." etc., *ad nauseam*.

I know I ought to beg the pardon of my readers for inflicting this dose of malodorous vulgarity on them; but there is a reason for it. This girl, low and vicious as her own boasts show her to be, is a type of a class sufficiently large to be worth noting. It will be observed that she manifested no sense of shame in relating her detestable exploits, but evidently regarded her indecent violation of the commonest rudiments of fair play as something to be proud of. This could hardly be the case, unless she was conscious of reflecting a somewhat widespread sentiment in the environment to which she had been accustomed. For she did not belong to the slums and was not a member of the criminal class, or what the world would call immoral. On the contrary, like many of her grade, she was inclined to be religious. She intended to take an active part in a Christian Endeavor society. She confirmed her conviction that it was wicked to play cards—although it is highly virtuous to push an inoffensive woman into the mud! In a word, she is simply a typical product of the ultimate effect of that abhorrent personal vice known as race prejudice. The refined and educated men and women, who weakly give way to the milder manifestations of this species of false conceit, little realize how their influence, filtered down through the various social grades, and becoming coarser with each descent, leads on the one hand, to such disgusting episodes as that related above of herself by this specimen of degeneracy, and on the other, to the unspeakable horrors of lynching. Anyone capable of following a logical process, and understanding something of human nature, need not be a profound student of psychology to work this out for himself. It may seem to be a small thing for you to "draw the color line" in your personal intercourse, and to close your doors to your equal in intelligence, refinement and character, merely because he happens to possess a skin darker than your own. It may seem that the consequences of your folly touch yourself alone, by narrowing your range of sympathy, impairing your value as a factor in social progress, and robbing you of all right to be reckoned with the noble band whose clear ideal is that of universal brotherhood. It is not true, however, that this self degradation is the only result of giving way to a weakness of character, which you foolishly allow to prevent you from rising superior to the childish nonsense imbibed from others. Whether you like it or not, your influence extends much further. As the abominable caste system has paralyzed the social progress of India, so the no less abominable evil of race prejudice is poisoning the life, stunting the growth, and destroying the moral sense of South and North alike. The evidence is "writ large" on every hand; and the poor degenerate of the hop fields is merely a convenient illustration.

Unreasoning in its brutality, race prejudice seeks little pretext for inflicting its cruel wrongs on men and women often as highly developed and gifted as their persecutors. Even when a mistake is admittedly made, no particular harm is supposed to be done, since the sufferer is scarcely to be classed as a human being. A general of the United States Army recently made the statement that he preferred Negro soldiers for specially dangerous duties, because they fought as well as the white soldiers, *and it did not matter whether they were killed or not*. It is not necessary to be even suspected of criminality to be a victim of race bigotry. The San Francisco Star thus graphically describes a characteristic performance, committed, as usual with utter impunity by the members of the “higher” race:

A negro was “done to death” recently at Hamburg, Ohio, to gratify the “spirit of fun” of some “intelligent” whites. He was a harmless old man, beloved by his neighbors, and earned a precarious living for himself and wife by washing windows and doing odd chores. The “joke” was as fiendish as if the actual crime of burning him at the stake had been perpetrated. The facts are these: Goodlow was accused of some imaginary crime, and the jokers proceeded to mete out to him the punishment which they pretended he so richly deserved. After tying him with ropes and nailing his feet to a board, he was covered with wood and shavings and a kerosene rag placed near his nose, so that he would get the smell. A bucket of water, which the victim was informed was coal oil, was thrown upon him and preparations were being made to apply the torch when the old man ceased his outcries.

Then the jesting ceased. The jokers realized that their fun had been carried too far. They removed the debris and began to untie the negro. When it was discovered he was dead he was carried quietly away and dumped into a corn crib, where the body was found the next day.

It is not stated that the “practical jokers” have been arrested, or that any effort will be made to prosecute them for murder. Their victim was only a “d-n nigger.”—The Star.

Here is the press report of an occurrence in Louisiana, during the yellow fever days of 1905:

“New Orleans, Sept. 7.—Probably the most shocking outrage yet committed in the name of quarantine protection came to light today, when an appeal was made to Dr. J. H. White, in command of the Federal forces here, to intervene in the interests of humanity.

A helpless negro had been chained to a pine tree on the eastern outskirts of Pass Christian, Miss., for over two days, exposed to the prostrating sun, and unprotected from swarms of mosquitoes.

The negro came from Gulfport, Miss., an infected point. He had reached East End, on the outskirts of Pass Christian, intending to see his wife, when he was apprehended by a posse of citizens and chained to a tree.

He was not sick. He was left in that desperate condition for over two days without shade, food or protection.

The Mayor and health officers of the Mississippi town were appealed to, but they replied they could do nothing.

Then an appeal was wired to Dr. White. He got busy with Dr. Wasdin in Gulfport, asking for the report on the case, and the negro now occupies a tent in the Pass Christian detention camp.

The utter absence of pretext for this hideous and heartless crime became still more evident in the discovery, after the usual period of detention, that the victim of ruthless inhumanity was not, and had not been in the least infected. It is needless to say that nobody dreamed of punishing the ruffians. Any man so wicked as to allow himself to be born with a black skin must expect such outrages as a matter of course, and return thanks that they are no worse.

The case of Kit Bookhard, of Eutawville, S. C., is another good example of the fiendish influence of race prejudice on men of the ordinary type. This young Negro was on a fishing excursion with several whites. One of them became angry over some trifle, and swore at him. The young fellow, being hotblooded, swore back; and this is the sole offence charged against him. Nevertheless, since a Negro is supposed to have no rights which a white man is bound to respect, Bookhard was arrested, although the white man was not, and was actually sentenced by the manipulators of injustice in the local court to fifteen days in the chain gang. One might suppose that this infamous travesty on justice would be enough for even the most unprincipled race bigot; but the vice we are discussing is never satiated with villainy. That same night, the poor boy was taken out and lynched; and the following day his body was found in a horribly mutilated condition. Of course, nothing was done about it. It was only one "nigger" less; and who cared? The sleek exponents of race prejudice and apologists for lynching are respectfully referred to this practical exemplification of their doctrine. It will be interesting to see the steps of mental casuistry by which such an act can be interpreted as a "defence of womanhood." Truly, "a tree is known by its fruits."

It is not merely in the South that this evil spirit prevails. In many parts of the North, it breaks out at times to an alarming extent, and proves itself to be as vile and despicable as everywhere else where it is known. Even in New York City, "race riots" occur at times on very slight provocation, and are characterized by the same unreasoning hatred and the same murderous brutality that turns men into fiends, and destroys all sense of decency. In 1905, such a wave of criminal insanity swept over a large portion of the city. Even after the trouble had died down, a gang of white ruffians set on a Negro and almost murdered him, for the awful offense of "walking through a white man's neighborhood." The ringleader of the mob was, however, arrested and punished, since the general sentiment of New York is not quite so indulgent toward the grosser criminal manifestations of race hatred as that of some other communities.

At the Bull Run military manoeuvres in September, 1905, some of the Southern regiments actually threatened to massacre the soldiers of the colored regiments, should any of the latter be assigned to duty in the vicinity of the white army men. Such miserable things can race prejudice make out of human beings. Ask any of these "chivalrous gentlemen" why he should murder an unoffending man for merely standing in line a few yards from him; and he could only reply by a string of expletives as vile as his cause.

While the historical origin of chattel slavery is to be sought in other sources than that of race prejudice, the survival of so monstrous a relic of barbarism down to the middle of the nineteenth century cannot be explained, except by recognizing the effect of race bigotry in degrading the



intelligence and destroying the sense of justice and humanity. In some respects, the later form of slavery was far worse than that known to the older nations. True, the ancient Roman possessed the right of life and death over his slave; but that was due to the stern code of the times by which every grade of authority was invested with extreme power over those subject to it; and human life was less valued than in our milder age. The father might, by the same harsh rules of law, put his own son to death for the slightest act of disobedience. If, however, a slave became emancipated, which was an every day occurrence to which any faithful slave might reasonably aspire, his previous condition of servitude was not thereafter held up against him, as a bar to all ambition. He was not branded with the stamp of eternal inferiority, in spite of his proven merits. That species of contemptible injustice was reserved for a section of the Anglo Saxon race, which even seeks to protract the initial outrage on the human rights of the slave to the latest generation of his descendants, regardless of their intellectual and moral achievements. No amount of sophistry can ever juggle away the damnable infamy of this effort to compass the everlasting degradation of an entire race.

As in times of peace, so in times of war, the criminality of race prejudice is demonstrated, wherever the sentiment has an opportunity to manifest itself. If war is hell, as we are informed on high authority, war against a supposedly inferior race is more especially conducted as the work of devils. The deeds of American soldiers and their officers in the Philippine Islands would have been impossible in a war between the United States and any people of Caucasian origin. Imagine French or German prisoners being tortured by the "water cure," to make them traitors to their own country! Just think of a British Commander-in-Chief being made captive by so utterly knavish and dastardly a trick as was practiced on Aguinaldo! Think what would happen if an American general ordered his men to ravage Italy, killing and burning everywhere, and sparing not even non-resistants or children over ten years of age! What if a company should fire from ambush on a wedding festival party in Austria, murdering the bride and several of her attendants, on account of a bare suspicion that some of the guests were unfriendly to the invading army! All these and worse villainies were perpetrated on the unfortunate islanders who were guilty of the heinous offences of possessing brown skin, and of defending their independence against those who had bought them like so many cattle from their former oppressors. And, incredible as it may seem, the perpetrators of these unspeakable iniquities not only escaped all punishment for their enormous crimes, but were in most cases actually lauded and dubbed heroes by a servile press, reflecting a corrupt public sentiment. Even such an extreme specimen of unscrupulous perfidy and brutality as Funston, so far from being ostracized and treated as a social outcast by the people he has dishonored, is feted and applauded by groups of Americans claiming to represent ordinary standards of decency. In fact the small body of honorable and highminded Americans known as anti-Imperialists, who can see no beauty in wanton atrocities which degrade national character and blacken the fair fame of their country, are vilified and maligned as traitors, because they will not call black white and evil good. When a whole nation can be thus demoralized, can any words be too harsh for the delusion which is the cause?

The giant evil of lynching has been more fully brought to the attention of the American people than the other results of race prejudice, and therefore need not be treated with the elaboration that would be requisite, were the facts less widely known. The sickening details of these mob outrages are too well known to readers of the daily press to require extended repetition. The degeneration of human nature under the spell of an inhuman prejudice is evinced, whenever a Negro, guilty or suspected of a crime, is seized by a howling mob, without a fair trial or a chance

to be heard in his own defence, and strangled with a rope or riddled with bullets. A creed that turns men into murderers is born of iniquity. But what shall or can be said, when it is found that murder is not enough to glut the rage of the demoniac crowd, but that the fearful accessories of the lowest grade of savagery are demanded to satiate the abominable degenerates who gloat over the spectacle of human agony. The records of some of these scenes are too foul for publication. No conceivable outrage that the most debased pervert could remember or invent has been spared by the demons in human guise, who burn at the stake criminals of a dye less deep than their own. The lyncher, who, is always a coward, represents the lowest depth of degradation the race has ever reached; and he is the legitimate offspring of race prejudice, which is the foulest passion that ever sunk its votaries immeasurably below the level of the brute. These are not words without meaning, but are amply justified by the cold facts which are accessible to all who care to know the truth. It will not do to say that these are the acts of irresponsible mobs. If governments have any legitimate function, it is to protect the humblest citizen against herds of criminals, as well as against the individual ruffian. Why are not these thugs brought to justice? Their crimes are not transacted in a corner. They act in large numbers. The participants are well known, and can easily be identified. Why are such human monsters left free to repeat their crimes? How happens it that they are often noted as prominent and well known citizens? The truth must be faced, that lynchers do not belong to the ordinary criminal class, and that this one form of crime is the only one of which they are commonly guilty. That is to say, they are "only" murderers of the most brutal sort, and have all the virtues consistent with this "slight idiosyncrasy."

One is really at a loss for words in dealing with the subject of lynching. The horrible wickedness of it is so plain, and so gigantic, that only one conclusion is possible; and comment falls so far short of the terrible reality as to constitute an anti-climax. It is hard to stretch our imagination so far as to realize that these deeds belong to our day and land. They read like the nightmare tales of the distant past, when the ferocity of the baser passions was unchecked by any of the influences of culture which the later centuries have brought to bear. So mighty an evil enchanter is race prejudice, that it has transported thousands of men into the blackest period of the Dark Ages, from which the civilized world has long celebrated its escape. No lesser influence could do this hellish deed; and accordingly we find the lynchings due to any other cause than that of race hatred to be but few and far between, except (as will soon appear) where the cultivation of race prejudice has operated to create a general disregard for the value of human life.

The only attempt to defend lynching, which has dared to lift its head in the light of day, is the stock assertion that the honor of white women must be protected against the assaults of Negro brutes. A black woman, of course, is supposed to need or deserve no protection. Nor is any crime rendered more glaring by the color of skin of its perpetrator. There are many white ravishers, as well as black; but the stake has never been kindled for the former. Will some gentle apologist of lynching tell us why? If it is asserted that the white criminals of this class are few, and the black ones many, proof of the statement may well be demanded. In any case, the admissions of the friends of mob murder prove that lynching is no deterrent. The whole argument, however, if such it may be called, is transparently false in the light of established facts. It could be justified only if lynchings were all, or nearly all, for offences against womanhood. Inexorable statistics prove that this is not the case, and that all talk about "the usual crime" is simply an attempt to deceive the ignorant and susceptible reader. For example, in 1902, there were 96 lynchings in the United States. Of these, only 30 were for assaults or attempted assaults on women, and all the rest for causes which had not the remotest connection with "the sanctity of womanhood."

In 1903, the lynchings numbered 104. Only 21 of them were for attacks on women; and many of the number were admittedly for the most trivial causes. No year since statistics were kept has shown a very different proportion. Of 2,875 lynchings, covering a long term of years, only nineteen in every hundred were for crimes against women. It must also be borne in mind as a very important fact in this connection, that these mad mobs, athirst for blood, take little or no pains to make sure of the guilt of their victim, and that in a number of even this small group of cases, it has later turned out that the assassins butchered an innocent man. However, so long as they gratified their vampiric lust for blood, they worried little over such a trifling mistake. The other eighty-one per cent covered fifty-six different offences, which were considered worthy of a hideous death, ranging all the way from murder to "impudence." Let these facts be hurled in the face of every apologist for America's most gigantic crime. Let it be clearly known that the lyncher is a murderous dastard, trying to skulk behind a woman's petticoats, to avoid being known as the vile thing he is. The statistics prove conclusively that the talk of protecting womanhood by torturing and burning men at the stake is an insolent lie, and known to be such by those who most find it convenient to make use of the subterfuge.

Where race prejudice predominates, not only do lynchings become more and more frequent, but whole communities close all sense of morality, and take part with the fiendish murderers. This is shown by the extraordinary rarity of any adequate punishment being inflicted on the scoundrels. Even as far north as Delaware, when the murderers of a Negro, by burning him at the stake under circumstances of extreme atrocity, were actually in custody, the Grand Jury, sitting at Wilmington, refused to indict any of them. This is an exhibition of Delaware morality, under the strain of race prejudice. Rev. Robert A. Elwood, pastor of a Presbyterian church in Wilmington preached a sermon the day prior to the lynching, which practically advised the commission of the crime. Yet this clerical murderer, as he must needs be termed, was not even arrested. although "Anarchists" have been hanged in this country for much less, and innocent of the charges against them at that. But race hatred is favorable to criminals. The murderer was indeed brought before his Presbytery; but that highly Christian body saw nothing unworthy of a Christian preacher in his exhortation to crime of the foulest order, and merely cautioned him to be more careful, and left him still a minister in good standing, to expound the gospel of brutal murder to his heart's content.

That race prejudice, and not a desire to expedite justice or protect womanhood, is at the bottom of the lynching spirit, the conduct of the blood-hungry mobs abundantly testifies. One murder quickly leads to another. It is not enough, in many cases, to slaughter the suspected culprit. The mob has had the trouble of coming together, and it must have the satisfaction of glutting its hellish rage on more than one poor wretch. Thus, in Doddville, Miss., a Negro and his wife were burned at the stake for some supposed crime; and the mob, rioting in the satisfaction of seeing its fellow-beings suffer, incidentally murdered five other Negroes who had nothing to do with the offence. There have been many instances where an innocent Negro has been murdered because his name was mentioned by the culprit already captured, who hoped thereby to save himself. In Carlisle, Ind., a constable was shot by a Negro whom he was arresting; and a mob immediately proceeded to drive twenty Negro families out of town under threat of death. In Joplin, Mo., a Negro was hung for killing a policeman; and the murderers, crazed by their taste of blood, followed up their first crime by attacking the entire Negro population of the city, burning their houses, and attempting to butcher the inmates. Like scenes were enacted in Evansville, Ind., and Springfield, Ohio, under

very similar circumstances. Such is the spirit of race hatred everywhere. Indulge it never so little; and it will not rest content until it has proven its real nature by deeds which shame humanity.

Let it not be thought that the lynching of the Negro is the only example of the murderous spirit engendered by race prejudice. All who know the history of the Indian in this country are well aware of the many peaceful members of that race who have been brutally murdered in sheer wantonness, because the cowboys of the plains held that a Indian was scarcely to be classed as a human being. The history of Caucasian crimes against the Indians is a long and terrible one; and the end is not yet. There can be no real sense of justice where the doctrine of "inferior races" prevails. The Chinaman too has frequently been the victim of race riots of the most brutal nature, especially on the Pacific Coast, where the prejudice against him is as dense and unreasoning as that against the Negro in the South. Most frightful of all are the fearful massacres of the Jews in Russia, which have sent a thrill of horror through the whole civilized world. The cause for these atrocities is precisely the same with that for our own lynchings; and until we purge ourselves of every trace of race prejudice, the blood of our Jewish brothers and sisters in Kishineff and Odessa, no less than that of the victims of our American mobs, is on our heads; and we have consented unto their death. No attempt to evade responsibility can wash the blood from our hands. Only when we repudiate and with our utmost strength cry out against the evil principle, of which these crowning horrors are the natural outward expression, can we pronounce ourselves innocent.

The next step beyond encouraging murder of the disliked race is that of declaring a vendetta against those of the "superior" race whose opposition to race prejudice constitutes a moral reproach, not to be borne by the sensitive natures which exult in midnight murder and in burning human beings at the stake. Accordingly, we find this step readily taken by those most infected with the virus. The Democrats of an Alabama district actually elected to Congress a man, if it be lawful to call such a being a man, who said in a public speech that it would have been a good thing if somebody had thrown a dynamite bomb under the table, when Booker T. Washington and the President of the United States were dining together. Another chivalrous Southerner attempted to murder R. W. Blair, a Republican speaker, after a speech in which Mr. Blair defended the rights of the Negro as far as represented by the Republican policy. This carries us back to the murderous assault on Charles Sumner by Preston Brooks for a similar reason, when the brutal thug was treated as a hero by thousands of the Negrophobiacs of his day. In Beaumont, Texas, a Socialist lecturer, Ben Lyon, incautiously made some remarks in behalf of the rights of the colored race. As a consequence, he was beaten almost to death by a gang of ruffians, and could obtain no redress, although the identity of his assailants was no secret. Thus race prejudice, being itself an insult to humanity, leads on from crime to crime, bringing a fresh degradation with each step, and giving the lie outright to all who attempt to concoct excuses for its iniquities.

An invariable concomitant of race prejudice is a general lowering of standards, particularly with regard to the sacredness of human life. Here cause is followed by effect so speedily, that there is no escape from the conclusion. Where the life of the inferior race is valued at so little, it does not take long before murder in general appears a triviality. Hence, while the rest of the world is growing steadily away from the encouragement of deeds of violence, those sections where race prejudice is strongest are the last to yield to the influence of civilization in this regard. Here, again, the Southern United States form a case precisely in point; and never was demonstration of a social evil more clear. For more than a hundred years, as everybody knows, race prejudice has been most intense in that section; and as a natural consequence, it is in that section that duelling and feuds have so long survived their utter extinction in sections of the United States where

universal human rights are more clearly recognized. Even ordinary homicides are not only more common, but more tolerated than elsewhere; and the reason is plain. The Southerner is not made of baser material than his Northern brother; in fact, there are many meannesses common enough in the north to which the Southerner disdains to stoop. He has, however, by false and pernicious social and moral training, the roots of which are easily to be found in an abnormal attitude toward another race, become so thoroughly demoralized that it is constitutionally impossible for him to feel in the depths of his nature the awfulness of the crime of taking human life. A century ago, when Aaron Burr killed Hamilton in an infamous duel, and was regarded with horror throughout the North, he had only to flee to the South, in order to be welcomed with open arms. Even then, although a large degree of race prejudice still hung about the North, the South was so much more fully saturated with the vicious principle, as to be far more tolerant of bloodshed. The lives of the early abolitionists would never have been safe anywhere in the South, according to the threats of the Southerners themselves. Even in the North, wherever race feeling was strong, its opponents were roughly handled. Garrison, as all know, was mobbed in Boston, and narrowly escaped with his life; while in Illinois, Lovejoy was actually murdered. Yet, throughout this entire period, any slaveholder might have come and said what he pleased in any of the leading abolition strongholds. The cause which is compelled to resort to brute force, as a means of reducing its opponents to silence, brands itself as devoid of moral truth. A love for openness and fair play is ever characteristic of conscious rectitude.

A people so ready to resort to violence against another race and against those individuals of their own race who dare to whisper an honest word against the prevailing prejudice, is naturally predisposed to accept the arbitrament of force in personal disputes. So it follows that the barbarous iniquity of mutual murder, known as the duel, is still in vogue in large sections of the South; and society approves the slaying of a fellow-creature to satisfy some petty punctilio of honor. Thus the brilliant but erratic Brann was done to death for writing scathing editorials about a certain institution. It was so much easier to kill him than to prove his statements false and libellous. His slayer was no mere thug of the gutter, but a man of high standing in the community; and since Brann was armed, and hence supposedly able to defend himself, the attack which laid him low was not considered either criminal or even conduct unbecoming a gentleman. Much more atrocious was the coldblooded murder of the unarmed Gonzales, by the dastardly ruffian, James Tillman, whose political misdeeds the fearless editor had vigorously exposed. There was absolutely not one mitigating circumstance to the awful crime. In any northern state, no influence could have saved the villain from the extreme penalty of the law for wilful homicide. Yet the great State of South Carolina produced a jury which actually placed the seal of their approval on the foul deed by acquitting the murderer. This is what race prejudice can make of men. A lovely spectacle, is it not? The Kentucky feuds and the code of dishonor which tolerates them are too well known to require comment. Even the clergy share the general willingness to fly to arms against their dearly beloved brethren. Rev. James D. Cranfil is one of the most distinguished Baptist clergymen of the South. Some years ago, the Prohibition Party regarded him as a man of such character and eminence, that its members nominated him for Vice President of the United States. Yet this "man of God," falling into a dispute with a brother minister, manifested his devotion to the mild gospel of the "Prince of Peace," by engaging in a revolver duel with his fellow prophet, in so conspicuous an arena as a crowded Pullman car. And it is not on record that his conduct was deemed so unworthy of a "man of God" as to cause him to be disfellowshipped by his denomination. This is evidently Texas religion. The Louisiana brand can hardly be classed as

very different, since there we hear of a recent shooting affray by a prominent preacher over a little sorghum. It is needless, however, to multiply instances. That the Southern gentleman, not the mere street tough to whom such performances are relegated in the North, is more addicted to carrying firearms, and to deciding comparatively slight quarrels or avenging even insignificant insults with physical violence, if not actual bloodshed, nobody will deny. That the instances cited are typical, the acquittal in the Tillman case, and the lack of any outburst of moral indignation in the other cases, make perfectly clear. The North has plenty of faults of another nature; but it is certain that such murderous assaults, by men of such standing in this section, would both bring immediate and inevitable punishment to the guilty, and arouse indignant denunciation on every hand. No would-be murderer could wave his bloody hands in a Northern pulpit; nor could one of our local grafters publicly shoot down the editor who had exposed him, and walk out of the court room scot-free, amid the applause of representative citizens. It takes the filthy influence of race prejudice to lower men to that level. When the Southerners learn to respect men as men, these occurrences will become equally impossible with them. There are such splendid qualities in the Southern character, as all who are fortunate enough to have friends among the better element of that section are well aware, that it is a profound shame that one widespread vice should warp the judgment and conscience in a manner to produce so unfortunate a moral transvaluation on the point most essential of all to a highly developed form of society.

That the foregoing picture of the most ghastly of "the fruits of race prejudice" is not a mere highly colored personal view, but the logical deduction from facts which appeal as well to others whose attention is drawn to them, will appear from the following thoughtful editorial in the Springfield (Mass.) Republican, which will bring this chapter to a fitting close:

The scandalous acquittal of James H. Tillman in South Carolina is at least having the wholesome effect of stirring up an earnest agitation in the southern newspapers over the cheapness of human life in that section, the prevalence of homicide and the many failures of the law to mete out punishment. One of the Georgia judges made the following remarkable statement from the bench recently, which is serving also to fasten public attention upon a situation in this respect which is admitted on all sides to be alarming:

"Human life in Georgia is getting too cheap. Statistics show that there are more homicides in this state than there are in the whole British empire. There are 122 people killed in Georgia to one killed in England. Here one person in 100 is convicted and punished, while there one in three is made to suffer. Hence the difference in the number of crimes."

As it is in Georgia, so of other southern states. One little community in South Carolina was able the other day to count up something like a dozen homicides to its credit within a year. Homicide and murderous assault are the prevalent crimes. Of fourteen indictments returned by the grand jury at Savannah one day recently, three were for murder and half a dozen for murderous assault.

What the Georgia judge has to say of the situation is impressive, and there is of course great force in his conclusion as to the cause of the difference in the number of crimes between that state and England. But it does not cover the whole case. There is another cause for the prevalence of homicide in the South which the southern

people will be less ready to admit. This is the presence of the negro in large numbers, and the prevailing attitude of the white race toward him as one little more than an animal, and to be recognized as a member of the human family only in the abstract. It is, of course, inevitable, under such conditions, that life among the blacks is held cheaply among the whites, and in the exercise of a contemptuous disregard for negro life by the so-called superior race white life is reduced in the scale of sacredness by reactionary influences. The criminal records of the South will show, beyond any question whatever, that, after the negro has been eliminated altogether as a positive factor in crimes of blood, the whites by and of themselves are subject to a prevalence of homicidal conduct probably unequaled in any other civilized community on the face of the earth. And the reason for this is as stated.

The white South in this particular may fairly be described as the bleeding victim of its own arrogant and presumptuous prejudices of race. There is but one remedy for the unfortunate situation, so sincerely deplored, which will reach to the root of the trouble; all others must be of secondary importance. This is to be found in that modified white attitude toward the negro which accepts him as a human being entitled to and accorded entire equality under the law.

## CHAPTER IV. THE FANATICAL SILLINESS OF RACE PREJUDICE.

“O that the words which make the thoughts obscure  
From which they sprang, as clouds of glimmering dew  
From a white lake blot heaven’s blue portraiture,  
Were stripped of their thin masks and various hue,  
And frown and smiles and splendors not their own!”

Percy B. Shelley: Ode to Liberty.

Cicero has left on record his wonder that two augurs could meet without laughing in each other’s face at the absurdity of the pretended arts of divination by which they gulled the people. With more reason, a civilized man of the twentieth century may well be visited with amazement at the preternatural solemnity with which human beings of presumably mature minds exchange congratulations over the joint possession of an abnormal fear of some mysterious contamination sure to arise from casual contact on equal terms with another human being. Of all the legends of irrational superstition, this is perhaps one which the more finely evolved natures of the future will find it peculiarly difficult to understand. “What!” we may suppose them to say, “Did these crude notions prevail in an age when Darwin’s epoch-making scientific achievements had made the common origin of the human race a matter of schoolboy knowledge? Had these people read a single line of history, that they acted as if in total ignorance of the fact that every race developed according to its opportunities, and that the most despised at one epoch often became the dominant world-power in a few generations or centuries? Had they no eyes to see the persistently appearing worthiness in scores of individuals belonging to the very races they had chosen for their special contempt? Were they in any sense truly civilized, those queer folks, who gravely settled a man’s social position, not by the scale of individual merit, but by the preposterous test of mere ancestry, and with whom a few grains of coloring matter in the skin weighed more than a thousand lofty deeds, or the highest conceivable efflorescence of mind or character?”

“Fanatical silliness” is none too strong a term. The blind stupidity of race prejudice is simply unfathomable. It is silliness, in that it acts in mad disregard of all logical considerations, and when challenged can give no coherent account of itself; it is fanatical, in that it stops its ears in blind rage against any attempt to point out a more excellent way, and will not listen to even the gentlest suggestion that there may be some considerations overlooked by its devotees, and also in that it seeks to force itself on the whole world, and visits with vituperation and persecution all who take a saner view, and refuse to follow it into its wild excesses. The Southerners are very emphatic on the subject of local self-government, a very excellent principle in itself. “The problem is ours; let us solve it in our own way; we understand better than you the conditions which confront us,” they cry to the North. Very well, let them solve their own problem, by all means, provided they do not in so doing oppress their fellow-men. But they are not content with



being let alone. They insist that Northerners, in their own homes, their own schools and elsewhere, shall adopt Southern notions on the race question and pour forth abuse on those who fail to do so. If they wish to be let alone, why do they bring their propaganda of race bigotry into the North? Why do they attack the President of the United States, for lunching with Booker T. Washington, a man whom his worst enemies admit to be the peer in intellectual culture and refinement of any American, North or South? Pretty business for those who pretend to believe that each section should attend to its own affairs! Gentlemen, you must first learn to mind your own business, before you complain that others do not mind theirs. The President is the representative of the whole people, North and South, black and white; and he has no right to give official recognition or sanction to any prejudices or dislikes, justifiable or unjustifiable, or to any race or class discriminations or divisions which happen to exist in any part of the Union, or between any of the numerous elements included among his fellow-citizens. He is bound by his oath of office to forget all divisions, save those which separate the loyal from the disloyal, the law-abiding from the criminal, and to recognize in each the degree of personal merit actually manifested. The social recognition accorded to Booker T. Washington at the White House was in exact accordance with the strictest sense of propriety, and well became a President mindful of his duty toward the American people, and anxious to deserve the confidence reposed in him. That such an act should entail hostile criticism, betrays how little the foundation principles of American democracy are understood in some quarters.

The fear of contamination from casual association with the “inferior” race would be unqualifiedly ludicrous, if it were not so disgusting and so closely allied to the darker results of race prejudice briefly sketched in the last chapter. No man objects to a room full of colored waiters at a fashionable restaurant, nor to their close proximity in the discharge of their duty. In fact, they are so generally preferred that we must wonder what becomes of all those supposed offensive features referred to by the advocates of race discrimination. And yet, should one of these eminently aristocratic diners glance across the room, and see a refined and gentlemanly Negro, in every way the equal of the other guests, quietly seated at a table more than twenty feet away, and eating his meal unobtrusively, what horror would overspread the Caucasian countenance! How he would shriek at the intrusion of the black spectre! Why? No man ever lived that was able to tell why. Yet through the North as well as through the South, an enormous proportion of the restaurants and hotels degrade themselves and spit on the principles of human rights for which our fathers lived and died, merely because of an insensate superstition that a Negro behind a white man’s chair is totally innocuous, but that a Negro beside the same white man will in some mysterious way infect his blood with a deadly germ of social degradation. What fun this nonsense would be, if it did not come so near home to us, and illustrate so painfully the slow march of human reason!

The childishness of the human mind under the influence of superstition or prejudice is nowhere more clearly exemplified than in the various devices for drawing lines of discrimination unwarranted by nature and repugnant to good sense. Most readers are familiar with the extreme rules of the Brahmin religion for maintaining its caste system; and no Westerner was ever heard to approve of them. Yet they are not a whit more irrational than the artificial rules established in this country, and wherever race prejudice bears sway. In Russia, the Jew is subject to a thousand infamous restrictions, for no earthly reason except that he is a Jew, and must be kept down. We Anglo Saxons of course cry out against this as a barbarous outrage, and

comment superiorly on the lowness of Russian civilization—and straightway turn round and exhibit the same qualities in our treatment of the Negro, the Indian and the Chinese.

Let us look at a few phases, taking them almost at random. In education, there is perhaps as little excuse for race prejudice as can be found anywhere; and yet even here it is abundantly manifest. Of course, a true university, like Harvard, rises far above anything like race discrimination. Centuries of high academic standards have ingrained in such an institution respect for genuine ideals, and contempt for sham. Hence we find William E. B. Dubois, now so deservedly honored by the whole Negro race and by thousands of Anglo Saxons, winning full recognition throughout his college course at the hands of both students and faculty, and Clement G. Morgan elected class orator by one of the largest and brainiest classes that ever graduated from any college. The writer, as a fellow-student of these magnificent representatives of their race, remembers with pride and pleasure the social intercourse had with them in bygone years. Booker T. Washington, too, we find an honored Commencement guest, and welcomed by all at the annual dinner where Harvard alumni meet together with the visitors whom they delight to honor. It is this very emancipation from petty and outworn prejudices which makes Harvard truly great, and causes the breadth of her spirit and the largeness of her conceptions to be remarked by all who come in even casual contact with her. But what the greatest representative American university can afford, and find her educational and moral standards raised instead of lowered by so doing, a hundred third-rate schools and colleges, North and South, dread with more than mortal horror. Yet schools and colleges are supposed to stand for high ideals of human unfoldment. The students come together for a common purpose, which they assist each other in working out. Here, if anywhere, caste, class and race lines are to be ignored, as superstitions too contemptible to warrant a moment's tolerance. In the pursuit of knowledge, if nowhere else, all stand on an equal footing, and can only gain by stimulating one another to earnestness in the common quest. It is a poor way to train a child or youth for a life of service to the human race, by teaching him at the outset to despise some of the component parts of that race, and that for no personal unworthiness, but for a mere accident of birth. How can it be expected that the elements of justice can be instilled into young people who begin their educational career by being taught to commit so huge an injustice in their own school? How can it be expected that they will acquire sentiments of humanity, when their very teachers disgrace the name by dividing the human race into privileged and non-privileged races? How can any intelligent scientific instruction be carried on in an educational institution that ignores or defies the primary conclusions of biology and ethnology? The school or college that draws any race or color line, no less than the merely sectarian religious school, by that very fact becomes self-limited and unfit to carry on the work of education in any progressive spirit. This is the great secret of the uniform inferiority in results accomplished in all schools so narrow in standpoint. Nevertheless, strange to say, the country is full of these half-baked institutions, North as well as South. The Northwestern University in Chicago is charged in the daily press with having expelled a young woman, merely because she had colored blood in her veins. If this is true, it is a degradation from which this institution will not easily free itself, and which makes it unfit for patronage by self-respecting persons. Kentucky has actually put the brand of indecency on its own forehead by enacting a law making it a crime for whites and Negroes to study at the same college; and Berea College was fined a thousand dollars for violating this infamous and barbarous statute. If this is Kentucky civilization, it is to be hoped that kind will not spread to the more decent States. Even in Kansas, the Boards of Education in several cities have provided for separate schools for the two races. Virginia has extended its intolerance to the

Indians, and has produced a school which excludes some children, for no reason but the mere fact that they had one sixty-fourth of Indian blood in their veins. When race prejudice can go to this point of simple idiocy, comment becomes unnecessary. A pitiable fact in this connection is the readiness of the pupils themselves to take up and often outrun the irrational prejudices of their elders. At Evansville, Ind., for example, we are told that all the children of a certain public school left the room on the entrance of a very dark-complexioned girl as a pupil, but returned when it was proved that she was of French descent and had no Negro blood. Here it is clear that we have nothing but a mere baseless prejudice, since the appearance and characteristics of the girl were the same, whatever her descent. Eastman's College, in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., is evidently deficient in the calibre of the students it attracts, since one hundred and sixty of them signed a petition for the removal of a young Porto Rican, "supposed" to be of Negro ancestry. Just how his presence could hurt them in any way, they did not even pretend to state. To the honor of the President of the college, himself a Virginian, he treated the insolent demand with the silent contempt that it deserved. It is to be hoped, for the credit of the institution, that the signers of the petition carried out their threat to leave the college, unless the infamous act of injustice they desired should be perpetrated; since college education could do but little for such half-witted and malicious snobs, and their future careers would be almost certain to bring extreme discredit on any institution which had fastened on itself the responsibility of having graduated them.

In some quarters, race prejudice is so intense that even separate schools for the Negro are discouraged. The old spirit which prohibited education of the slave, lest he learn something of his rights and cease to believe the damnable lies of the wretches who held him in bondage, and persuaded him that it was his duty to submit to tyranny, is not wholly dead. Hence we find Vardaman, the demagogue, the disgrace of whose unanimous election Mississippi will not live down in a generation, actually opposing Negro education in an official message to the legislature, and vetoing a bill for an appropriation for the purpose. Of course, the whole South is not to be blamed for the absence of civilization in Mississippi. Its saner sentiment is thus expressed by the Richmond News Leader:

The state of Mississippi is learning the danger of putting a badly-balanced crank in a responsible position. Governor Vardaman, of that State, has brought shame upon it by vetoing a bill to appropriate \$2,200 for a colored normal school. His veto is based on the broad ground that he opposes the education of the negro. This position is so flagrantly opposed to all the teachings of civilization that it will shock the country. It sounds like something from the dark ages.

In a like contemptible spirit, white citizens of Montgomery, Ala., although well knowing the excellent work done by Booker T. Washington for the uplift of his race, objected to his establishing a school in their vicinity. What can be said of such people as these? It is a pretty scheme, to discourage the efforts of a race to acquire knowledge, and then to twit it with ignorance and accuse it of confirmed inferiority!

The morbid fear of the slightest social contact with the assumed inferior race is about as much in line with the modern spirit as the old fear of witchcraft. Such contact hurts only those who think it is going to hurt them. The highest society of all European countries finds no contamination in such association, even when it is frequent and intimate; nor is any deterioration found to result to any American individual or family which shakes itself loose from the terrible dread

which besets the race bigot. It is a bugbear, which vanishes the moment it is squarely faced. There is no more sense in a Southerner running away from the sight of a Negro in any social circle, than for a Russian to draw his skirts away from a Jew, for fear of contamination, or for a Turk to shudder at the thought of admitting an "accursed Giaour" to his tent. Here is a fine sample of irrationality on the subject; taken from the Houston (Tex.) Post:

In January, 1903, at one of the card receptions at the White House, a bunch of colored "ladies and gentlemen," the "ladies" being arrayed "decollete," were present in great form, and they monopolized one entire corner of the East Room, because the white guests preferred to give them all the room in the house. Scores of southern members and their ladies left the house in disgust. The writer of this article saw the sight with his own eyes, and recalls yet that Hon. Morris Sheppard and Hon. J. L. Slayden of the Texas delegation were present. The remaining receptions were slenderly attended by the southern people in Washington.

Should the simple question "Why?" be asked of this shocked editor; he would be unable to answer it. He lives in a section where the odd superstition of bad luck from such social grouping prevails; and that is all that can be said. Why should one guest at a public reception cavil at the presence of another one, whom he has not the slightest ground for believing to be beneath himself in culture, intelligence or character? merely for an accidental difference in the color of the skin, for which the individual was not responsible, since he could not select his own parents? This is a conundrum without an answer. Yet there is no point on which race prejudice insists more strongly than on this. At a dinner given by Mark Hanna to the members of the Republican National Committee, several of the Southern members stayed away because a Negro member of the Committee was not boorishly insulted by being left off the list of invited guests. Yet these men who would eliminate common courtesy in dealing with the Negro, were only too glad of the assistance of this colored National Committeeman in drumming up votes for their party. The Negro is good enough to be used as a tool by ambitious politicians, but not good enough to be treated with ordinary decency by these same politicians, who doubtless consider themselves gentlemen, although it is difficult to see on what ground. The members of the New Orleans local Council of Women have gone even further, apparently in order to prove the extreme limits of absurdity possible to minds twisted by race prejudice. They actually refused to attend a reception given by the officers of the National Council of Women, held in their own city, because two Negro women, who were not present nor in the city at the time, were members of the National Council, and might possibly attend some future reception in some other city! Evidently they had a hazy notion of something like vicarious contamination. If this sort of thing were written down as an imaginative satire, it would be condemned as a grotesque exaggeration. That it is an actual occurrence, merely illustrates the imbecility which race prejudice can implant in minds sane on all subjects unconnected with their pet fetic.

Nor is this nonsense applied only to the Negro, North or South. While writing this chapter, I have clipped from the daily press an account of race prejudice in Hartford, Conn., where a distinguished and highly refined graduate of Yale University, Dr. Young Wing, was ordered by his landlady to leave his boarding house, merely because of his Chinese ancestry. Mrs. Sarah Warner, his landlady, was not herself silly enough to harbor any such prejudice, but merely so weak and lacking in self-respect and genuine principle as to suffer a few narrow-minded boarders

to bulldoze her into flinging this gross insult at a man of greater worth than all of them combined. It is this dastardly yielding to an abominable prejudice by those who have sense enough to know better, that is responsible for many of the most infamous acts of insulting race discrimination in communities where the sentiment of the intelligent portion of their members had long outgrown the childish notion that a man's merits were to be determined by the color of his skin.

It is refreshing when the tables are occasionally turned on the race bigot, as in the following incident, clipped from the daily press of recent date:

When Von Kip, a Pell street grocer, housed himself in the exclusive purlieu of No. 148 Winthrop street, Brooklyn, there was an outcry that would have done credit to a Boxer mob in Pekin. For Von Kip despite his name, is no German. He is a full-blooded Canton Chinaman.

Well-to-do Americans dwell in Winthrop street. Most of them own their houses and esteem themselves children of the soil. When Von Kip arrived, with his almond-eyed beauty of a wife, who rejoices in a name made famous by Bret Harte, to wit, Ah Sin, there was indignation.

"Shall we live near a heathen Chineese?" they cried. The householders took their complaint to W. A. S. Bowman, from whom Von Kip rented his house, and so serious was their demand that Bowman finally ordered Von Kip to move.

Von Kip's smile was childlike and bland, and he told Mr. Bowman that he would move at once.

The next day vans drove up to No. 148 Winthrop street and moved the entire Chinese family away from those premises and into No. 144, just two doors away, which Von Kip had purchased from W. O. Moore, a member of a Manhattan law firm. There, with pretty Ah Sin, two fine sons and four little daughters, Von Kip ended his journey and began to decorate and furnish his home in true Chinese style.

Every morning he goes to his business place in Pell street dressed in the best fashion of the Orient, and as he walks down the street he is followed by the maledictions of his neighbors. When a reporter visited the house yesterday, he was met at the door by a sturdy boy, fourteen years old.

"Father is not home," said the boy. "My name is Tom See." Under persuasion Tom See grew confidential: "Why don't the people around here like us?" he asked indignantly.

"Why don't they want us to live here? Aren't we as good as they are? Don't we dress as well and live as well as they do? We bother no one, and yet they bother us."

"Will you become American citizens when you grow up?" asked the reporter.

"You will have to ask father," said the young diplomat, and softly closed the door.

A full record of the manifestations of race prejudice in its ugly as well as its pretty aspects would fill volumes. In many Southern cities, the Negro is compelled to ride in separate compartments or seats from the white man, in all street cars and in separate cars on railway trains. In Atlanta, Negroes have been forbidden to try on hats in a store. In Birmingham, Ala., a clerk's union has adopted a rule never to fit shoes or gloves for a colored lady. The Atlanta Constitution,

one of the foremost journals of the South, lately printed as an item of news that a white drummer, on taking his seat in a street car, placed his valise on the seat beside him. A Negro girl having entered the car, which was now full, the report states that a Negro suggested that she take the seat occupied by the drummer's valise. The burly brute, instead of moving his valise as any gentleman would have done, told her that he would knock her through the window, if she moved in his direction, and that he would shoot the Negro, if another word was said on the subject. The conductor took sides with this self-announced criminal. The story was told with gusto, this leading Southern paper evidently approving of any species of outrage perpetrated on members of a despised race. A large section of Southern "gentlemen" and "ladies" seem to find positive enjoyment in the contemplation of any humiliation imposed on the Negro, not merely where they themselves are concerned, but on general principles. Even religious persecution, though equally cruel, was never so wantonly malicious, as race prejudice causes its votaries to become. A mean delight in the suffering or humiliation of an inoffensive person marks about as low a stage of human degradation as the civilized individual can reach. The surest way to get hundreds of congratulatory letters from Southern race fanatics is to discover some new method of insulting or outraging a member of the Negro race. A sentiment so profoundly degrading in its effect on human nature is beyond question one unfit for any decent man or woman to entertain. A barber refuses to shave a Negro preacher; and his discreditable act is cabled all over the country, bringing him multitudes of congratulations from the inferior members of the Anglo Saxon race; while it is probable that only two or three others, in addition to the writer, took the trouble to let him know how and why the better element of the country condemned his base insult to a man better than himself. A Chicago chambermaid seeks notoriety by refusing to make the bed in a room occupied by Booker T. Washington; and an atavistic gang sends her a large purse as a reward for being as despicable as themselves. Senator McCarmack prepares to fight for the repeal of the fifteenth amendment to the National Constitution, as soon as public sentiment is sufficiently debauched to make success possible. In nearly every Southern State, the Negro is partially disfranchised, in defiance of his plain constitutional rights; and the self-confessed criminals have the insolence to brag of their successful villainy, and to whine against Federal interference with their violation of Federal law. Tom Watson, the pretended reformer, has the effrontery to prate about human rights, and to accept nomination for office on a "reform" ticket, while denying the fundamental rights of human beings to all members of the black race. In one Southern State after another, the dominant political party dares to outrage the moral sense of the entire world, by openly proclaiming as its central issue the intention of trampling a whole race of human beings into the dust, for a mere difference of color. The President of the United States is denounced, if he gives any official recognition to a race which forms so large an element in the citizen population of the United States. When a hoodlum mob drives out a Negro postmistress and threatens to murder her, the President is looked upon as a tyrant if, confronted with so glaring an act of treason against the United States, he closes the postoffice. The scoundrels ought to be thankful that they were let off so easily, as sedition is not often so lightly passed over by any government. But the race bigot looks on himself as a privileged character, enjoying a divine prerogative to commit the most glaring and dastardly crimes. His boasted chivalry toward women vanishes into thin air, as soon as the rights of a colored woman are concerned. A real gentleman would of course display the same spirit of honor toward the womanhood of every race; but race prejudice is incompatible with any of the higher virtues.

The evil spirit is the same, North as well as South. In Atlantic City, N. J., the mayor, a jack-in-office who has been guilty of numerous other acts of petty tyranny, regards even the great Atlantic Ocean as too small for the accommodation of both races, and has had the insolent presumption to issue a ukase barring colored people from the surf. This comes pretty near being the limit. It is reported that in Syracuse, Ohio, a town of 2,000 inhabitants, no Negro is permitted to live, or even to stay over night. If one attempts to do so, he is stoned out of the town by the hoodlum gang of criminals that own and control it. There seems to be no decent sentiment in the entire community; and even the law offers no protection against the dastardly thugs who are trained to crime from boyhood by their fathers, who would be too highly complimented by being compared to primitive savages. A whole American community of lawless ruffians is small credit to the great State of Ohio.

New York is full of the worst type of race prejudice. A few days before writing this chapter, the author was on an elevated train, when a coarse-looking individual by his side broke into the utterance : "What are we coming to? There is degradation for you!" No degradation being visible, the author asked what he meant. "Why, look over there," he answered, "see that white girl sitting between those two black coons." The two Negroes and the lady with them all appeared to be refined and intelligent, and immeasurably superior to their vulgar critic; but the incident illustrates an attitude of mind which is not confined to the South, but thrives wherever ignorance and prejudice are encouraged. In Huntington, Long Island, a colored Methodist Church stands side by side with a white Episcopal Church, since modern "Christians" find separate churches necessary for the two races, North as well as South. This simple fact shows that modern Christianity is totally unrelated to the teachings of Jesus, which abhor all such artificial dividing lines between human beings. However, the white church was accidentally burned; and its congregation decided to sell the rectory, and abandon the site. They found, however, that the mere presence of a church of fellow Christians of a darker hue made other Christians unwilling to buy the property.

Hence these followers of the "meek and lowly Nazarene" proceeded to show how little Christianity had done toward making even ordinarily decent and civilized human beings of them, by threatening to burn the colored church, and to drive away its pastor. When the Young Woman's Christian Association planned to open a branch for colored women on Carlton Avenue, Brooklyn, the white residents of the neighborhood held a mass meeting to protest against any application of the doctrines of human brotherhood in their snobbish neighborhood; and some of them went so far as to threaten violence. The last two illustrations are pertinent in demonstration of the hypocrisy of all defences of race prejudice which rest on the pretended danger of moral contamination from the presence of degraded and criminal representatives of it. Here was the same outbreak of savage hatred, without the faintest cause or palliating circumstances. Just as in the insults heaped on Booker T. Washington, the mere color of the skin is the only ground of offence, the individuals in question being open to no other objection. Even identity of religion cannot soften the viciousness of this diabolical malice.

The vices of men are reflected in their governments; and it is therefore not surprising to see that official acts of injustice to unfavored races are the rule, rather than the exception. Southern disfranchisement of the Negro has already been mentioned, and might well fill several volumes. The fact that the naturalization laws of the United States bar out Mongolians from citizenship is an infamous blot on our national fame. The Japanese, taken as a whole, are incomparably more civilized than several of the white races of Europe; and yet this contemptible discrimination ranks the most enlightened and highminded son of Nippon below the most ignorant and brutish

Roumanian or Bohemian who comes to these shores; and this outrage is the fruit of one phase of race prejudice, reacting to the damage of the country guilty of harboring it. Even Henry George, Jr., who might have been expected to have inherited broader principles in behalf of a common humanity, advocates opening the doors of the United States to white races alone. And such small-minded men are called reformers!

In Boston, about two years ago, the police took a fancy to see if they could find any Chinamen in the city who had been smuggled into the country contrary to the provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Law (itself the product of race prejudice, and a piece of miserable injustice from beginning to end.). The method chosen was simplicity itself. An army of police suddenly descended upon Chinatown, and proceeded to seize on every Chinaman they could find anywhere. No Celestial, whether at home or abroad, attending to business or in pursuit of pleasure, could escape the dragnet, unless able to produce on the instant, and with no time allowed for search, the official document declaring him rightfully a resident of this country. All who failed to meet this insolent demand were summarily crammed into the patrol wagon, and carried to the police stations, where they were locked up for the night. Out of several hundred thus outrageously deprived of their liberty, it was ultimately found that scarcely one individual was minus the token of the privilege of breathing American air under the unjust Exclusion Law. Yet for this wholesale crime of false imprisonment, not a policeman was punished; and the victims of the outrage received no redress of any kind. They were only Chinamen; and how could they expect the rights of human beings in this free country? Imagine such a crime committed against several hundred Englishmen or Germans! How swiftly condign punishment would fall on the heads of the brutal offenders! How the European papers would teem with reference to the barbarism and lawlessness of American officials! But any villainy can be perpetrated on the despised Mongolian, merely because all sense of justice decays, where race prejudice breathes its poisonous spirit into even the highminded Anglo Saxon. Of course, there were protests, long and loud, from the decent people of Boston, who revolted against the brand of shame thus placed on the fair name of their city; but the base immorality of race prejudice was too strong for the honest and upright element to overcome. Even the daily press, in the face of this flagrant abuse of authority, was far from united in voicing its indignation; and one despicable sheet, the Boston Record, actually chose such a time, when men's brutal passions were already inflamed, to print the following editorial lines:

A riot in Chinatown tomorrow would not be an unmixed evil, if the police have their revolvers loaded and are ready to shoot. The sight of these dirty wretches in the street cars is enough to upset any one, and the hotter Boston is made for them, the better for Boston.

The fact that a journal of this description, with its damnable effort to incite police and people to riot and murder, still circulates in Boston, is comment enough on the extent of a vicious race prejudice in the American city which, most of all, ought to have reached a higher plane of civilization. It is difficult to see with what face Bostonians can reproach the Negrophobiacs of many of the Southern cities.

The St. Louis World's Fair, where the achievements of every nation were accorded recognition, was conspicuous for its insult to the Negro Americans, who alone were totally unrepresented, although their exhibits at the minor fairs previously held in Atlanta, Charleston and Nashville had



proved of special interest and value. Nothing was done to protect the rights of colored citizens; and it is a shameful fact that with all the restaurants on the Fair grounds, a Negro could not get a meal anywhere on the premises. Such is the dishonorable official discrimination possible in a country where color is ranked higher than character, and where a drop of coloring matter beneath the skin outweighs the loftiest mental and moral achievements. Either such a perverted civilization must go down in disgrace; or its future generations must blush for the meanspirited prejudices of their sires.

Race prejudice is unfortunately not confined to the slums and to the "privileged classes," where so abnormal a mental trait is to be expected. Even the trades unions, representing many of the most intelligent workingmen and workingwomen, are ignorant and base enough to draw the color line. When a great strike was won in California by the combined energy and loyalty of Americans, Mexicans and Japanese, all working together, Samuel Gompers, head of the Federation of Labor, exhibited his own unfitness to hold any honorable position calling for an intelligent and broadminded man, by refusing to recognize the charter of the local Union, unless they would let themselves be bulldozed into barring out their Japanese brothers, who had stood by them so nobly in the time of stress. The dastardliness of this eminent leader may be suffered to speak for itself. Numbers of trades unions, even in the North, dishonor themselves by adopting by-laws, which prohibit any Negro from becoming a member. And then they complain that Negroes are scabs and strikebreakers! If the Negro has not yet developed a full sense of the solidarity and brotherhood of labor, the blame must rest on the shoulders of those who would deny him the right to earn an honorable living by the side of his white brothers.

The shortsightedness and folly of the color discrimination of the trades unions is even more conspicuous than the meanness and inhumanity of such a policy. The Negro cannot starve, and must not be expected to submit tamely to so gross an injustice. If the white workingman refuses him as a helper, he must have him as a rival. The Negro cannot help himself. He must follow the law of self-preservation; and the narrow race prejudice of the trades unions is responsible, if he is forced by their unreasoning and heartless ostracism to become the tool of the Baers and Parrys, who rejoice in nothing so intensely as in divisions in the ranks of labor. In a recent book, Professor Graham Brooks, who is anything but a fanatic, and is everywhere recognized as a most reliable observer, remarks:

"I asked one of the largest employers of labor in the South if he feared the coming of the trade union. 'No,' he said, 'it is one good result of race prejudice, that the negro will enable us in the long run to weaken the trade union so that it cannot harm us. We can keep wages down with the Negro, and we can prevent too much organization.'"

And the average trades unionist is idiot enough to play right into the hands of such "employers of labor," whose great aim is to "keep wages down," and to prevent organization! Dixie, the prominent organ of the cotton manufacturers, some time ago, made the same brag, declaring that so long as the white and colored workingmen could be kept apart, by fostering race prejudice, the existence of the Negro in the South was a great blessing to employers, and that he must always be kept there, as a means of preventing the rise of trades unionism in that section. That trades unionists, in the very teeth of these unblushing avowals, should allow themselves to be made catspaws by the worst enemies of organized labor, must be looked upon as one of the most marked evidences of mental deterioration under the bane of fetichistic superstition, which

history has to record. A man who is fool enough to commit industrial suicide to spite his brother of a darker skin, has only himself to thank, if he fails to awaken sympathy.

Even Socialists and other apostles of international reforms are often tarred with the same brush of race prejudice. Demanding justice for all men, they themselves are unwilling to admit members of the colored race into their own organizations on equal terms. Scarcely a movement of any character is free from some measure of the same reproach. The color line is met everywhere, and is everywhere found to be a serious handicap to the cause which tolerates its deteriorating influence. In the haunts of snobbery, in the hovels of vice, in the realm of pleasure, the trail of the serpent is on all sides to be seen. No one is benefited by it; multitudes are injured; useful activities are crippled; humanitarian causes are rent with hopeless divisions—and all that an insane superstition may be suffered to poison the very sources of national existence. Not merely in behalf of the principles of justice and humanity, which race prejudice denies and hates; not merely from sympathy with the wrongs and sufferings of a cruelly outraged race; but as a lover of my own, the great Anglo Saxon race, I appeal to all highminded men and women to join in one stern, relentless crusade, not against individuals, but against a vicious prejudice, indulgence in which will wipe out all that has been gained from the past, and bring on our own proud nation that doom ever visited by natural law on those peoples that have blotted out their highest ideals.

## CHAPTER V. SOME ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND RACE PREJUDICE.

“But all was false and hollow; though his tongue  
Dropped manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash Maturest counsels.”

John Milton: *Paradise Lost*.

No cause is so bad, that it cannot boast an occasional champion. Hence, while race prejudice has chiefly maintained its hold by force and by appeal to blind passion, an occasional sophist has arisen, who is not broadminded enough to abandon an irrational position, but is sufficiently clever to see that no prejudice or superstition can permanently retain its influence, unless some semblance of an argument is brought forward in its behalf. None of these attempted defences even pretends to meet the fundamental principles developed in the first chapters of the present work; but a subtle effort is made to show that in some way the special prejudice in question is different from all others that have existed in the course of history. The Jewish or Chinese claim to hold all other races in some measure of contempt is of course based on a peculiar national vanity, or a belief in the favoritism of Heaven, and requires no discussion. The anti-Semitism which disfigures many parts of Europe is easily traceable to the manipulations of the medieval priesthood, and to equally discreditable sources, and is self-refuting. In devoting this chapter to the arguments employed against the American Negro, the general character of all excuses for race prejudice will be sufficiently shown, as the Pacific Coast attacks on the Chinese and even the highly civilized Japanese, the plainsman's fulminations against the Indian, and all other ebullitions of hatred toward particular races, however varying in detail, are of precisely the same class, and as utterly destitute of foundation.

It should be borne in mind that the reasons invoked in behalf of the claim of the Caucasian to essential superiority and permanent dominance do not precede, but invariably succeed the forcible assumption of authority over the so-called inferior races. The original usurpation is a naked act of violence; and the attempted justification comes later, as a mere afterthought. The attempt of the wronger to placate the aroused indignation of mankind by devising specious arguments in palliation of offences already committed, is so obviously a matter of special pleading, that its disingenuousness renders it justly suspected at the outset. Let us, however, take a brief survey of these belated attempts to excuse the inexcusable, and to reverse the operation of the fundamental laws of the universe.

The pseudo-scientific expositions of the theory of inferior races are very amusing, for all their pretentiousness. Without exception, they belong to a pre-Darwinian epoch, and are deserving of no consideration in the light of the established facts of modern biology. It is only natural that the leading works written from this antiquated standpoint cling to the exploded dogma of special creation, and ignorantly ignore or dispute the demonstrated facts of evolution, which the whole

scientific world now knows to be settled on an unshakable basis. A medieval science well befits a medieval prejudice.

And what are these noteworthy arguments, which would be too highly honored by a detailed treatment? We are told in elaborate detail, adorned by much semi-scientific verbiage, that there are many vast anatomic and physiological differences between the Caucasian and the Negro. These need not detain us long. Modern science has shown clearly enough the meaning of all these variations, and the manner in which they have arisen through natural selection and other environing influences. Magnified to the utmost, they in no way contravene a probability of one origin for the entire human race. The differences between races of men are all of degree, not of kind; and not one fact can be adduced in support of the contention that any infrangible barrier exists between any two races. Each, like all the others, possesses practically unlimited capacity for change and growth, wholly depending on environment. The immense flexibility of the Negro race is proved by the total transformation that has taken place in it during the comparatively brief period since the abolition of slavery. Even its worst enemies admit this. Their own talk of deterioration confutes them out of their own mouths. If new environments develop evil qualities, better environments will develop good qualities. They try to keep the Negro always in an inferior and servile position, and to destroy his self-respect; and then they have the monstrous insolence to taunt him with an inferiority which they themselves have induced and accentuated. Until the Negro has been given a fair show, extending over several generations, and has shown not the slightest signs of progress, it is dastardly and hypocritical to claim that his innate and permanent inferiority is an established fact. The remarkable progress he has made in a single generation, with less than half a show, smashes to flinders the unscientific assumption of his incapacity to develop under fair conditions. Talk of the brutality and stupidity of the Negro! The utterance recoils on yourself. If you do not want the Negro to be a beast, treat him like a man.

The argument drawn from religion is no less flimsy than that drawn from a misconception of science. The worst enemies of mankind, in every age of the world, have concealed their most glaring conspiracies against human rights, under a mask of superior piety. How many abominable sermons in defense of human slavery were preached before the war from the text "Cursed be Canaan!" What supreme devotion to God was expressed by the Spanish Inquisition and the authors of the St. Bartholomew massacre! How many solemn texts have been advanced by theologians of all ages, from Tertullian to Dr. Buckley, in behalf of the policy of holding woman in contempt, and rebutting her every claim to equality with man! What blasphemous petitions have been directed heavenward, for the triumph of murderous arms in the most infamous wars of conquest! It is, indeed, not strange that the advocates of race prejudice, hopelessly defeated in the forum of reason, and routed by the evidences of science, should rush to religion, and seek to borrow her white robes to cover their besmirched garments. And what sort of a case do they make out? Adopting the Jewish-Christian Bible as their professed standard, they proceed to torture the text into significations inconceivable to any but a special pleader. One popular theory endeavors to make the Negro a semi-human pre-Adamite. Another, or a phase of the same one, attributes the sin which brought about the flood, according to the Noachic legend, to the amalgamation of the races! The Hamite derivation of the Negro, being inconsistent with the foregoing fantasy, is invoked by those who find difficulty in the former view. This, however, is beset with stumbling-blocks for the race bigot. Assuming the historic accuracy of the tale, according to the credulous literalism which adopts it as a ground for race prejudice, on its very face it proves the descendants of Ham to be of identical origin with all the other nations of the earth; and once that

major point is admitted, no reasoning man or woman will accept the monstrous conclusion that a drunkard's imprecation on one of his sons for an act of slight indelicacy would be so ratified by a beneficent God as to condemn to hopeless degradation all the descendants of that son to the remotest generations. In fact, if mythical genealogies were to be taken seriously, it would be easy to show that the Negro is, according to the story in question, the descendant of the uncursed Cush, and not of the cursed Canaan. Of course, what the author of Genesis had in mind, was to furnish some sort of a pretext for representing the Hivite, the Jebusite and the Canaanitish tribes as under a special ban, and hence deservedly, crushed by the Hebrew invaders of Palestine. The African tribes, so far from being represented as under a curse, are exhibited as the founders of the great world-empires of Egypt and Assyria. Nor does any later statement in the entire Jewish writings warrant the assumption that the Ethiopian or other Negro tribes were looked on as under any ban whatever. On the contrary, the prophetic books have as bright promises for the descendants of Cush as for those of all other races, the only test being that of righteousness, not of the color of the skin.

The Christian Scriptures give still less comfort to those who dishonor the God they profess to worship, by making him a respecter of persons. No more plain condemnation of race prejudice could be pronounced than the unequivocal utterance that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Let these "literal Christians," who draw their skirts away from their darker skinned fellow Christians, even in the sanctuary, explain these words away, or confess themselves hypocrites. Moreover, this sentence is not wrenched violently from its context, but forms part of a plain exposition of the unity of the human race. It is in exact harmony with the entire book in which it is found; and not one line in the New Testament will be found in contradiction with it. On the contrary the brotherhood of man, without distinction of race, is so often reaffirmed, that it is almost impossible to admit the honesty of those who term themselves "Christians," and yet dispute in word and deed one of the most fundamental and essential tenets of him they call "Master," and of those they profess to regard as inspired apostles.

The shameless wickedness of Southern religious leaders, in this regard, deserves to be handled without gloves. These are educated men, who know better than to play fast and loose with what they call holy things. If race prejudice is stronger with them than conscience, they should have honesty enough to quit the pulpit, and not remain in it to undermine the teachings of the founder of Christianity. Take Bishop Brown of Arkansas, who thus attempts to justify his antichristian use of the Christian ministry:

"When in my lecture, I insisted that for the best interests of all concerned, it is necessary to draw the color line around the ecclesiastical field. as well as around the political and social domains, some met me with a vociferous quotation of such texts as 'There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'

"In replying to this argument, I professed a willingness to add what the Apostle for some reason left out, 'There is neither white nor black.' Nevertheless, I then contended, and I now contend, that this and other texts of the same import cannot legitimately be so interpreted as to condemn such distinctions and separations among Christians as would be effected by the drawing of the ecclesiastical color line; because such an interpretation would make nonsense of them.

“Take the text under consideration, which is the chief and consequently the most frequently quoted of all such texts, if it be interpreted in accordance with the views of those who consider that the true doctrine of the church’s Catholicity involves the removal of all lines of distinction, it would plainly teach that Christian men and women are obliged to ignore the fact that God has divided humanity into ‘male and female,’ and that they should dress and live as if there were no such differences.

“Therefore, all that such texts can legitimately be made to mean, is that Christians should not draw distinguishing and separating lines which God has not drawn. But the color line, like the sex line, was drawn by God, and this being the case, it is evidently the duty of all concerned to recognize its existence in the social institutions.”

Such sophistry is almost beneath reply. A recognition of equal justice and of brotherhood has no relation to a uniformity of dress and habits. This bishop would not establish separate churches and separate cars for women, on account of the difference of sex, which he compares to the difference of color, “drawn by God.” Assuming the doctrine of special creation, and ignoring for a moment its disproof by the scientific evidence that man has been on this planet for a hundred thousand years or more, and that racial distinctions are the gradual product of climatic influence, natural selection and similar causes operating through a long period of ages, the bishop has no ground whatever for assuming that his God has created men of different colors for the express purpose of making one inferior to the other. If this was a matter of divine intention, it is an extraordinary fact that not one of all the documents offered us as revelations from the Supreme Being say a word about it, and that in fact each of them is full of statements in direct contradiction to any such imaginary purpose. This “divine purpose,” which is nowhere expressed, and for which we have simply to take the word of men who have first formed a prejudice and later discovered, by a kind of “inner light,” that by an unaccountable coincidence, the divine will just happens to be in exact harmony with their own preconceived notions, belongs in the same category with our old and disreputable acquaintance, “manifest destiny.” They are a pair of sharpeners, serviceable only as cloaks for human greed and malice.

Let us take one more sample of cant on this subject. I quote the literal words of Rev. Dr. W. W. Landrum, a prominent Baptist preacher of the South:

“Southern conservatism on the negro question can never be understood except in the light of its history. First of all, in the light of its religious history. Slavery was once preached as a divine institution. Abolitionism and Atheism once meant the same thing. Stonewall Jackson’s courage was born of the conviction that he was engaged in a holy war. All Southerners are, at bottom, as religious as the Boers of Africa. This fact has been too often overlooked. It is meaningful.

“Today Southern people are the most literalistic and the most conservative body of Christians in the world. God’s providence, they concede, has overthrown slavery and they bow before his sovereign will to that extent.

“God’s choice of the Anglo Saxon race as the elect of mankind they maintain with a deathless grasp. Anglo-Saxon in the dictionary of the pious Southerner means modern Israel.

“For two and a half centuries they learned the doctrine at their mother’s knees, and drank it in with their mother’s milk. To this hour the doctrine beats in the blood.

“Absolute supremacy on the part of the white people they believe to be a duty they owe to God. Infidelity, in this sphere, is the unpardonable sin. No Protestant pastor nor Catholic priest could for a moment hold his office if his parishoners suspected him of a most remote tendency toward anything that smacked of negro social equality.

“Newspapers have little, if anything, to say on this aspect of the negro question, but it is paramount and universal. Disloyalty to special separation between the two races is a crime against God, according to the rock-bottom convictions of the religious population, which is the controlling leaven of Southern citizenship. The negro question is fundamentally a religious question. Hence southern sensitiveness concerning it.”

Fine rhetoric, is it not? But what does it really signify? Simply that the Southern “Christians” have not had sense enough to learn anything for two hundred and fifty years; and that, if the reverend gentleman has his way, they will learn nothing for two hundred and fifty thousand years to come, but will continue mumbling ancestral formulas, and clinging to a stupid Chinese conservatism. The utterance is typical of race prejudice, which always points backward, and has no forward look. So they accept the overthrow of slavery, do they? It is interesting to know that they will bow to the divine will, as revealed in cannon, but not as manifested in reason; But may not the complete overthrow of what they “once preached as a divine institution” suggest even to such minds as that of Dr. Landrum that the rest of the notion of “inferior races” may be as displeasing to “God’s Providence” as that portion of it regarding which the “sovereign will” has so clearly pronounced itself? Considering that the book they regard as his word distinctly says that he makes no distinction between races, one might suppose that the idea of taking their God at his word, even in spite of their antiquated prejudices, would finally filter through the minds of “the most literalistic and the most conservative Christians in the world.” A belief entertained without warrant and grounded merely on personal or national conceit, can be called “religious” only by an inexcusable misconstruction of language. “Southern sensitiveness” is really due to an entirely different cause. A man who occupies an illogical position is naturally sensitive to criticism which he knows himself unable to refute. If there were any real reason for race prejudice, somebody would have been able to find it before this. There being none, the easiest program is to throw dust in the eyes of inquirers by solemn-sounding pretenses of special communications from the Almighty, and by fearful fulminations against any who seek to dethrone the idol. A race bigot, so far from being the most religious of men, is in reality not a Christian at all, unless he evades the result of his blasphemy by holding with crazy Carroll that the Negro is not a human being at all, but merely a different form of ox or ass, and is therefore entitled to only such kindness as a merciful man shows to all his cattle. It may be mentioned, by the way, that Carroll’s atrocity is published by a “Bible House,” almost incredible though that statement may appear to civilized Americans.

It is impossible to find anything more tangible in the so-called religious argument. In fact, this argument is furnished only for the consumption of the more ignorant. Even Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., who is guilty of absurdities galore, fights shy of the ticklish proposition involved in setting an imaginary divine purpose against an express divine revelation. The honest Christian can find no more excuse for race prejudice in his Bible than the honest scientist in his study of nature. On this point, religion and science, though for very different reasons, are unreservedly agreed.

That race prejudice has no warrant in history, has already been affirmatively shown. The past of the Negro under unfavorable conditions has no bearing on the question of his ability to progress under favorable conditions. Those who object to giving him a show seem thereby to attest their own insincerity. Produced no great men, has he? Well, how many great men had our savage ancestors produced, when Julius Caesar ran over and conquered them? Do you know how many generations of training and opportunity it takes to produce great men? Only one generation out of slavery, and the black race has already given us in Booker T. Washington one of the greatest men of our age, and one whom Professor J. S. Bassett, a Southerner every inch of him, is yet constrained to pronounce the greatest man, with but one exception, born in the South within the last century. It has given us so true a poet as Paul L. Dunbar, and such mental leaders as Professors Kelly Miller and William E. B. DuBois, who would do any proud race honor by being numbered among her sons. It has given us, dotted all over this country, men eminent and successful in every walk of life. "Ah," you say, "but these are the few." So they are; but the opportunities likewise have been few. Suppose we take the South at her own estimation of the test of development. With her vast extent of territory, and her large population, how many really great men has she produced in the last century? Whether the test be applied to art, literature, science, invention, philosophy, education or industrial development, in any one of these departments she must yield the palm to the one little State of Massachusetts. Does this prove that Southerners are intrinsically an inferior people, and should always be treated as humble subordinates by their Northern brethren? No Northerner ever dreamed of formulating such a monstrous injustice. We judge our Southern friends by the possibilities they have shown, and measure their future by the best, not the worst of their past. That the one little town of Concord, Mass., produced in a single generation more eminent men than the great State of Mississippi in its whole history, does not prove that Mississippians are doomed to remain forever at the Vardaman stage of civilization, or rather of barbarism. One great man in a race proves that the race can produce great men. Fifty thousand well educated and honored citizens in a population of eight millions gives decisive proof of what can be done by the entire race, when sufficient time is given under the proper conditions. I use ridiculously small figures, to illustrate the principle.

The entire South has never yet produced a novelist worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the Negroid Alexander Dumas, or his scarcely less gifted son. The white blood, is it? Strange that the white blood, mixed with the Negro, should produce individuals equal not merely to the average, but to the very highest product of the pure white blood! If "miscegenation" can not only raise the Negro, but also develop a progeny superior to any of his ancestry on the white side, it is hard to believe that it can be the terrible thing it is depicted. A few more like Frederick Douglas would be a boon to both races. For one such, we could well afford to swap a dozen Watsons or Tillmans. Which horn of the dilemma will the Negrophobiacs choose? Either admit that the Negro by himself is capable of the highest sort of development, or quit opposing a racial amalgamation, which, by the terms of your own argument, is so rich in beneficial consequences to both races. There is absolutely no escape for you; and either solution is fatal to any further defence of race prejudice.

It may be added that the full-blooded Negro, from the time of the Homeric Eurybates down, has continued to furnish examples of his inherent capacity, within the extremely narrow limits of opportunity given him. Sir Samuel Temple, the eminent magistrate of Sierra Leone, is a marked example of a career paralleled by only a few Caucasians of the very highest type. There are two sufficient reasons why most of the eminent names in the United States are those of the possessors



of some proportion of white blood. The first is that the full-blooded Negro—thanks not to his own zeal for amalgamation, but to the lust of the white slave-owner before the war, is numerically in a very decided minority; and the second that the mulatto, as a rule, has received a thousand times the advantages and opportunities for development which the entirely black Negro has been suffered to enjoy. It is unnecessary to dwell on the rather obvious reasons for this last fact, sufficient cause being shown for concluding that the relative superiority of mulatto development over that of his blacker brother cannot be attributed to the white blood in his veins; but that his achievements go properly to the credit of the Negro race, and prove its capacity for progress.

We are told of the criminal tendencies of the Negro. Well, what on earth have we a right to expect from a race not fifty years out of the most degrading bondage? Ignorant? Yes, but who made it a crime to teach him to read and write? Do you expect less than two generations to undo the mischievous work of two hundred and fifty years? The wonder is not that there are so many brutal, stupid and criminal Negroes, but that there are so few, under the circumstances. With over three thousand college graduates, in spite of every difficulty being placed in the way, and with a reduction of illiteracy by over thirty-five per cent in thirty years, the progress of the Negro in education is truly astonishing. It must be remembered that he has nothing like the educational facilities accorded to the white race, and that in some Southern States, such nondescripts as the unspeakable Vardaman use official power to prevent the spread of Negro education. Crime? If his tendencies are bad, race prejudice makes them a millionfold worse, by slamming the door of hope in his face, and heartlessly telling him that it is of no use for him to improve himself, since he must always be a pariah; and that even if he becomes a Plato or a Shakespeare, he must not presume to think that he will ever be treated as anything but a tolerated subordinate. Such damnable doctrine is enough to fill any red-blooded man with a mad passion for revenge against the black-souled race with white skins, which could so ruthlessly trample down every noble ambition of their climbing brethren. If his tendencies are good, the enforced herding with the undeveloped, which race prejudice substitutes for the natural social life in companionship with his intellectual and moral peers of all races, acts as a dead weight to drag him down into the abyss of hopeless degeneration. The criminal Negro is the work of your own fathers, descendants of slaveowners! The failure to bring about a more rapid decrease in Negro crime is your own work, protagonists of race prejudice! How do you like it? If you want the Negro to progress more rapidly, give him a decent incentive. Race prejudice itself is the greatest stumbling-block in the way of his normal growth. Remove that; and time and opportunity will bring him up to your side, and prove to you that the “race question” is merely a figment of a diseased imagination. The Negro is not a problem; he is a man.

The fear of Negro political dominance troubles a great many Southern minds so deeply that they imagine it possible to elevate civilization by becoming ballot-box stuffers and thugs. Many of them even have the insolence to boast of crimes which would right-fully send any man duly convicted of them to the penitentiary. This is the lofty morality inculcated by Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., the great “reformer” Tom Watson, the refined and gentle Tillman and *id genus omne*. I do not wish to treat this subject lightly. After all, the South justly claims a measure of sympathy in her difficult situation; but our brotherhood in blood must not blind us to the truth, nor varnish over the fact that the black Southerner, even more than the white, has been the victim of injustice, and has a claim to our sympathy. No solution can stand, which is not for the equal benefit of both races. Political justice to the Negro does not imply carpet bag rule. That enormity belongs to the past, and may not rightfully be invoked as a pretext for perpetuating a revengeful wrong today. Let us

leave the dead to bury its dead, and go forward. All evils of ignorant Negro rule and the manifest injustice of robbing the Negro of his constitutional rights may be alike avoided by establishing strict educational qualifications for the exercise of suffrage, made in good faith applicable to both races alike, and by adopting an energetic policy of education. The over-throw of race prejudice, by bringing the Negro into a state of good feeling toward the Anglo American, will develop a sense of community of interest between the races, and solve forever a question which would never have arisen save for the original wrong inflicted on the Negro. No other solution worth a moment's consideration has ever been suggested; for a policy involving continual war or a perpetual armed truce between two races which must live side by side in almost equal numbers, is of the essence of madness; and the ridiculous impracticability of any scheme of wholesale colonization has long been demonstrated. Quit doing wrong; and begin to do right. It may offend long settled notions; but there is literally no other way out; for I doubt if the plan of exterminating the entire colored race which is the only other conceivable method, will ever meet with very wide acceptance.

It is hard to deal with magniloquent catchwords. The buncombe cry, "This is a white man's country," for example, contains not the slightest vestige of argument, but is a transparent appeal to blind an inflamed passion. It reminds one of nothing so much as of the savage grunt of the big hog, who seeks to thrust the lesser swine away from the trough into which he has greedily stuck his nose. The country was inhabited first by the red man, and now holds men of every color, the white race enjoying no natural monopoly by mere virtue of composing the numerical majority. In natural justice, the country belongs to all the men and women of every race who use it with due regard to the equal rights of one another; and no legitimate government can exist, save for the express purpose of defining and protecting these equal rights. The blessings of rule by the superior people have ever been invoked by the invader and the tyrant, and are at the root of the infamies of imperialism in every nation. Nearly all the unjust wars of the world have been waged on a similar pretext; and every form of domestic injustice has found its strongest hold in a doctrine so convenient for the more powerful and unscrupulous. The gospel of "the white man's burden," which had its little day, but is now hardly mentioned save with sarcasm, is a variant rendering of the same dangerous heresy. The fear of a barbarian irruption belongs to a past epoch, and is vainly resurrected as a bugbear today.

The old yarn that the Negro is inherently lazy and shiftless is pretty well exploded. The highest forms of industrial activity were hardly to be expected of a race, designedly kept for generations in dense ignorance, and just emerging from a state of absolute bondage. No matter what the inherent qualities of a race, common sense and justice would demand that its capacity for industry be allowed at least two or three generations of independence to manifest itself, before the formation of any general conclusion on the subject. In only forty years, however, the industrial development of the Negro has already attained such immense proportions, that his supposed incapacity for steady work must be relegated to the limbo of exploded superstitions. There is not the slightest shadow of reason to conclude that the Anglo Saxon or any other race, under precisely similar conditions, would have been able to show any better results. Statistics easily verifiable show that the improvement from year to year is constant and strongly marked.

The sneer that the Negro is unfit for independence and unworthy of respect, because he had not the courage and energy to break his own chains, comes with poor grace from those who are forever trying to scare us with the menace of a Negro insurrection. When Negrophobiacs cannot agree whether their bete noir is to be depicted as a meek and spiritless sheep or as a ravaging wolf, calmer thinkers may be pardoned for believing him to be neither the one nor the

other. Neither the Russian serfs nor the English villeins won their own freedom by conquest; yet their capacity for advancing to the heights of civilization is not denied. There are good historical reasons why the Negro rose in Santo Domingo, and did not rise in the Southern United States; but these reasons prove only that the Negro, like every other race, responds readily, for good or evil, to the influence of his environment.

The protection of civilized ideals, so earnestly invoked by our Southern friends, is indeed a thing to be desired and striven for. But civilized ideals do not involve the perpetual subjugation or humiliation of a portion of humanity, but the extension of all genuine benefits of civilization to the largest possible proportion of the human race. A doctrine so abnormal and inhuman as that of race prejudice aims at the destruction of civilized ideals, and inevitably tends to that result. The unity of mankind is the supreme goal of true civilization; and any influence which tends to promote division is the common foe of the human race.

The Southerners claim that they are being unjustly treated, in that they are not let alone to solve their own problem in their own way. I confess to having some sympathy with this argument, if only the premises were true; and I was sorry, as well as surprised, that no Southern statesman ventured to raise his voice in behalf of allowing the people of Utah to grapple with their own problem, unhampered by Federal interference. The argument in support of the Mormons has real validity; for the question of polygamy affects only those immediately concerned, except in the most distant and indirect way. Race prejudice, however, involves the demand of certain persons to trample on the rights of certain other persons; and the rest of the country has an interest in the matter. A band of burglars might, with a great show of virtuous indignation, condemn the law for coming between them and their victims; but the general consensus of enlightened public sentiment would not be apt to support their contention. Hence, when race prejudice takes the form of overt acts of interference with the personal liberty or constitutional rights of the Negro, it is the business of somebody else besides those who make themselves the sole judges of their right to trample on law and justice, and to oppress a weaker race. Where overt acts are not concerned, nobody desires to interfere with the local affairs of the South. But every doctrine publicly enunciated is legitimately open to public criticism; and no good cause was ever afraid of it. The fact that the South is afraid to allow free speech on the question, is an admission that she is in the wrong, and dreads being found out. Freedom of expression is the clearest heritage of every free people; and its denial sounds the tocsin of liberty. Yet wherever race prejudice is strong, gag law prevails. Two crimes always hug each other in a fraternal embrace.

In a prominent Boston paper, I find the following, as an ordinary news item:

“I understand that Dr. F. H. Knight, president of the New Orleans University, is to spend the summer in Melrose. Dr. Knight is a close student of the color question in the South; and undoubtedly his views will be heard many times during his stay here.”

I defy the entire press of the South to parallel this with a like expression of quiet tolerance toward the visit of any Northerner to a Southern city, and the prospect of hearing his voice in the discussion of the race question. Yet this liberal welcome to antagonistic views is the rule throughout the North. The enemies of race prejudice do not threaten to assault or to tar and feather an exponent of that doctrine, who makes himself conspicuous by the emphatic enunciation of his views. Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., moves about New York without the slightest fear of assassination or even minor assault. Those who hold a sane view can afford to hear the other side. “The Clansman” received a respectful hearing in New York; and nobody so much as dreamed of mobbing

it. What would be the reception of a company that should venture to play "Uncle Tom's Cabin" or "A Fool's Errand" in Mississippi? The presumptive evidence against race prejudice, from its hysterical intolerance and dastardly fear of free discussion, is enough in itself to condemn it.

If the race question is a local Southern issue, why do not the Southerners mind their own business? Why do they insist on thrusting it on the whole country, and denouncing all who do not agree with them? When they learn to let others alone, it will be time for them to ask to be let alone themselves. The moment they undertake to dictate to the President of the United States, whose business is to represent every citizen, Northern as well as Southern, black as well as white, they put themselves outside the pale of simple defenders of their own rights, and become aggressors on the rights of the citizens of the entire country.

Invariably beaten in the forum of argument, the champion of race prejudice produces the solitary weapon left in his armory. "Have you ever lived in the South?" If the answer is in the negative, the triumphant rejoinder follows: "Ah, then, you do not understand the question. Nobody can know what the Negroes are, unless he has lived right among them." Plausible as this sounds to some people, it is in reality as unadulterated a piece of sophistry as ever imposed on the most simple-minded listener. Let us analyze it just a little.

In the first place, the doctrine of "inferior races" is not new, nor solely applied to the Negro. It has been applied to almost every nation in turn; and history has continually given the lie to it. Even supposing that the Negro was guilty at the present day of all the faults that have been laid at his door, and of twice as many more, that would be no answer to the arguments drawn from history and science as to the possibility of his future advancement. A visit to the South, or a lifetime spent in that section, would increase any person's knowledge of the present status of the Negro; but it would in no wise affect the main argument. I do not doubt that many Northerners become Negrophobiacs after a prolonged sojourn in the South; but that proves merely the general tendency to form hasty judgments from superficial appearances, without stopping to analyze the causes of the apparent phenomenon. It is the pre-scientific method, which the study of primitive man teaches us to recognize. Because large herds of the less developed Negroes, kept together under the most degrading conditions, make their presence all the time felt by appeals to the eye, the ear and the nose, of a most offensive nature, it is to be concluded that this is all there is to the Negro question! In the name of common sense, whom do you expect to gull with such nonsense? Are you totally ignorant of the fact that we have thousands of Negroes here in the North, and are anything but unfamiliar with their characteristics? That he makes so different an impression on us here, is the clearest proof that he is just like any other human being, and becomes exactly what his environment gives him an opportunity to become. This very fact is an overwhelming argument against race prejudice.

The considerations by which the question is to be determined involve an appeal to philosophy, biology, anthropology, history, psychology, political and social science, universal human experience and practical common sense. They apply to one race or part of the world as fully as to another. One does not have to live in any particular locality to use his reason. The race question is not simply a Negro question. Even with regard to this special phase, the South, so far from being the best place to arrive at an impartial verdict, is really the worst. Slavery has left its psychological influences on the southern mind, steeping it with prejudices which have no root in reason. The inflammable temper which flares up in ungovernable rage at every criticism of its point of view, is not a condition favorable to judicial calmness in weighing facts and arguments. Besides, all the conditions are conducive to prejudice against the Negro race which only forty

years out of slavery, herded together under the controlling influence of its former masters, still inevitably steeped in ignorance, with the fearful taint of slavery yet in its blood, kept down as far as possible and almost universally treated as inferior if not actually subhuman, is seen under the most unfavorable aspect, and without the slightest opportunity to judge what it could do or become under fair and equal conditions. As long as an unreasoning and bigoted narrowmindedness slams the door of absolute social equality in the face of the man of color, despite his worth, he is robbed of encouragement to make the most of himself. The northern Negro, who has been given something like a decent chance, is a much fairer type of his race than his less-developed southern brother. To solve the Negro question, it is of less importance to know the status of the average Negro, today, than to know how far it is possible for a Negro to rise, under the best conditions. The South must deal as best it can with the practical difficulties afforded by temporary conditions; but it has no business to discount the future, and demand that its shallow provincialism be taken at par by the civilized world.

The Northerner is at a real advantage in studying the Negro temperament, since the thousands of Negroes here are of the same blood as the millions in the South, plus a greater opportunity for individual development. We can be more impartial also, through having less inducement to bias.

A recognition of such weighty considerations involves no insult to the South. Barring this peculiar mental obliquity, from which only a few of them seem able to escape, our southern brethren deserve all the honor that can come to citizens of any part of this fair land. But their attempt to boss us all in connection with this race question is as ridiculous as it is sometimes irritating. They want to be let alone; but they will not let the North alone. They claim that the northern Negro is different from the southern Negro, and then abuse us if we accord to our "different" Negroes any rights which they do not see fit to accord to theirs. For instance, the Denison (Texas) Sunday Gazeteer says of Cambridge, Mass., where a colored teacher has been made principal of one of the schools:

That is the only place we ever heard of where white people have sunk so low in the scale of decency that they place niggers as principals over white teachers in their public schools.

Decency, indeed! The vulgar fellow who could pen such disgusting and insolent editorial comment, has not the rudimentary conception of true decency. I defy any person to show the faintest atom of sense or justice in the position that a mere accident of color should rob a teacher of the position she has fairly earned by superior merit. My whole dispute with the apologist for race prejudice turns on just this: I put merit first; and they put color first. No amount of rhetoric can obscure this simple fact. There is no defense for race prejudice. Like other foul things, it lives because its victims are content to drug their conscience and stupefy their reason.

A Texas editor, and not one of the least of his tribe, can vilify Cambridge, because its citizens, in dealing with their own strictly private affairs, "settle their own matters in their own way," without asking permission of the irrational prejudices current two thousand miles away. And the city which has "sunk so low in the scale" has produced more distinguished names in art, science and literature than any entire Southern State, and has probably the highest standard of average culture of any city in the United States! The extent to which race prejudice can debauch reason is scarcely capable of exaggeration.

The cheap fling at the friends of justice, that they wish to make the Negro out an angel, is wholly unwarranted. We are well aware of the fact that the colored race, like every other, has

many serious faults, which will not be outgrown for many generations. In its present condition, it is indeed backward, relatively to the white race. We do not ask that a halo of glory be placed around the head of the Negro, but that he be given a man's chance in the world. We are not dealing with the past, but with the future; and we demand justice for the Negro, not merely for his sake, but quite as much for our own. Our Anglo Saxon civilization cannot afford to rest on a foundation of iniquity.

## CHAPTER VI. THE BUGBEAR OF SOCIAL EQUALITY.

“A backward race or class need not be radically altered to fit it for civilization. Most of the changes come of themselves, if the initial evils are removed. \* \* \* \* \* The development of a lower race—let us say the Negroes in America—does not necessitate remaking the Negro by an artificial process. Set free the series of natural changes; and the final results will take care of themselves. A surplus includes regeneration and new emotions, forces which will act and react until the whole class has been brought up to the level of its environment. Two races in one environment cannot be kept apart except by some exploitation that harms the weaker one of them. \* \* \* \* \* Progress cannot end while the natural growth in differentiated strength is followed by a conscious growth toward social equality. \* \* \* \* \* And every class must give its strength and character to other classes, and each race its neighbors.”

Professor Simon N. Patten: Heredity and Social Progress.

The question of social equality is so persistently harped on by the supporters of race prejudice, that it demands a chapter to itself. It is the last ditch in which they invariably take their stand. Never was Mumbo Jumbo tricked out in more horrific garb; and never was more ridiculously insignificant dwarf discovered, when mask, stilts and flaring bedizenments were removed. The bogey with which our Southern friends seek to scare us from exposing their prejudice has no relation to any fact or theory anywhere in existence. Social equality, as a generalization, exists nowhere; and nobody ever dreamed of applying it to the colored race, or to any other race, *taken as a whole*. Social intercourse is between individuals, not between races. Nobody says that the whole black race is the “social equal” (whatever that may mean) of the whole white race. Whether it is or not, is a matter of small consequence. Any man who is my match in intelligence, character and culture is socially as well as otherwise, my equal, no matter what the color of his skin may happen to be. If he also happens to be personally congenial to me, nothing but a stupid, unreasoning prejudice can make me silly enough to decline his companionship, merely because he happens to have a complexion darker than my own. If I have brains enough to be capable of an elementary conception of justice, I shall not discriminate against him, because the rest of his race are not on his level. So much the more credit to him, if he has risen superior to the handicap of his birth. In receiving him, I do not receive his whole race, nor indeed vouch for any of the rest of them. I want the best of every race. There are negroes and whites who are my superiors, negroes and whites who are my equals, negroes and whites who are my inferiors. The only fair and honorable way, in social as well as other relations, is to receive the individual strictly according to his own recognizable merits, without the least regard to the color of his skin or to the race from which it is his good or ill fortune to spring. A truly civilized people would do this as a matter of course, and never dream of raising any question over it; and those who are so tainted

with race prejudice as to be incapable of this simple justice, betray their bad cause by their utter inability to give a valid reason for it.

Let every man have the right to choose his own friends, and be respected in the exercise of that right. If all Negroes, all Jews, or all Irishmen, are personally distasteful to you, that is your own business; and you have the absolute privilege not to visit them, nor to receive them in your home. You need not speak to them when you meet them, nor in any way make friends or companions of them. But if the rest of us have more cosmopolitan tendencies, that is none of your business. We cannot provide separate theatres, restaurants, street cars, and sidewalks for every different race that a few individuals of some other race may have some finicky dislike to see in their neighborhood. In public places, idiosyncracies and prejudices must necessarily give way to the equal liberty of all; but in private relations, the individual is at liberty to consult his own preferences, no matter how silly they may happen to be; and I assure our timid friends of the South that no "fanatical Northerner" wishes to take this inalienable privilege of making a fool of one's self from any fetich worshipper who reveres pigment above brains or character. Nor would any Northerner be guilty of so contemptible an act of injustice and narrowmindedness as to ostracize any man for declining to receive in his home any person or persons whom he chooses to bar therefrom. We leave such dishonorable bullying tactics to the "Southern chivalry" which has not honor enough to respect the convictions and conscience of others.

When the catchword "social equality" is questioned, but little serious effort is made to defend the morbid fear implied by those who use it. They prefer to rush into hysterics, and say that they will never, never submit to such a thing; but they find it rather difficult to explain what the particular thing is, to which they will never submit. Nor is a prejudice or superstition in any wise rendered more worthy of respect by the passionate declaration of those who are slaves to it, that nothing shall ever induce them to take a different view. A rational opinion is always held subject to the possibility of change, if new light is thrown on the matter from any source; and a rational man or woman is always glad to welcome any suggestions which may tend to open up a new line of thought. He does not shut himself up in his shell like the oyster, in sheer dread of learning something.

Equality, forsooth! Of course, I do not associate with every Negro as my equal. Many of them are my inferiors in education, mental culture, refinement and character; and it would be very unpleasant to me to admit them to the inner circle of my friends. In the limited time I have for social intercourse, I must select those for close companions, who are personally congenial, and with whom I have most in sympathy. This includes some Negroes, who are distinctly my equals in all essential particulars, and who have much in common with me. It includes a number of my own Anglo Saxon race, and individuals here and there of almost every other race, all selected by natural attraction, and on their personal merits, and not on a mere accident of birth or color. This is the common sense method of choosing friends and associates. There are thousands of Anglo Saxons, whose personal proximity would be as unpleasant to me as that of any of the more undeveloped strata of Negroes. Because I dine one day with Zola or Mommsen, furnishes no ground for presuming that my table is logically open the next day to degenerates of their respective races, like Castellane or Johann Hoch. Nor did Roosevelt's perfectly proper invitation to Booker T. Washington in the faintest degree imply that the White House dining-room was a general assembly room for such Negroes as disgrace their race to the same extent that the founder of Tuskegee honors it.



Admission of any man to the honors he has fairly earned does him simple justice, and injures nobody. Suppose the race as a whole is degraded and hopelessly inferior, and that one solitary member of it, with all the odds against him, has splendidly triumphed over every difficulty, and given the world a noble specimen of manhood. Why rob him of his deserts? If it had not been for the despicable insults to Booker T. Washington, and to those who have given him the simple recognition which belonged to him as a matter of course, none of us would have insulted even the most rabid of race bigots by intimating that they could be so devoid of a sense of justice. The fact, though painfully apparent, is still almost incredible. Were the thesis of general racial inferiority true, the solitary shining exception would deserve all the more honor; and men and women worthy of the name would rejoice in according it to him.

In all the civilized countries of Europe, the intelligent and refined Negro is admitted to any social circle open to a white man of like qualities; and the "dominant race" has suffered no deterioration from its failure to bow to a stupid prejudice. Hence this fear must be recognized as exploded. Not one case, in all history can be cited, where a bare freedom from race prejudice has lowered the culture of any individual, or caused the deterioration of any civilization. In the foregoing pages, there is conclusive proof, drawn from an immense reservoir of facts, that indulgence in race prejudice has corrupted both men and nations, and that in many distinct ways. The friend of civilization, basing his conclusions on facts, rather than on rhetoric, will not find it difficult to adjust the conflicting claims of two policies, which exhibit so widely differing results. Nine tenths of the facts recited in this pamphlet—and but a small fraction of the material on hand has been used—might be proved absolutely false; and the tenth that remained would be sufficient to overshadow all the tangible allegations ever made in defence of race prejudice.

A foolish argument sometimes heard is that we must be unjust, for fear of consequences; that if "social equality" is extended to one Negro, all the rest of the race immediately become impudent and unbearable. The absurdity is obvious. If such a result follows in a given case, race prejudice itself is the sole and entire cause of it. You try to hammer into the Negro's head that he is a predestined inferior, merely because he is a negro, and that it is of no use for him to try to become anything higher; and you fill him with sullen resentment at the injustice, not merely to himself, but to his whole race. It is you, not he, who have made social intercourse a racial and not a personal matter. Well, naturally, when your abnormal notion receives a sharp setback by the conspicuous act of some man as much in the public eye as Roosevelt, the victim of your injustice exults in the affair as a victory for his whole race. The remedy is in your own hands. Let the Negro know that henceforth he is to be received in accordance with his merits. If he chooses to remain ignorant in the face of real opportunity, and will not render himself intellectually, morally and culturally fit to mingle in polite society, it is his own fault. Instead of forcing the higher class of colored men to cleave to their race in a continual war against the white oppressor, detach them by opening a door of advancement which will kindle their ambition to honorable achievements. Help on the process of the evolution of the Negro race, by encouraging the superior men in it. In this way, you will rid yourself of the principal dangers you affect to fear. A brutal and ignorant crowd is only dangerous, when provided with able leaders. Such leadership will be impossible, when the just grievances which cause the ablest men in the colored race to cast in their lot with the less worthy in an anti-white propaganda, are removed, and when every colored man is given to understand that his own merit will determine his social position. You have tried the other method, and have stirred up almost a racial war. You have turned the gentle ante-bellum Negro, whom you could criticise only for excessive tameness, into a smouldering volcano of justified

discontent. Why not try a more reasonable plan, and see if it does not work better? The colored race has always responded readily to kindness. They have become men and women; and it is too late to think of turning them again into chattels. Give their human qualities a chance; instead of trying to suppress them. They have tasted civilization; and they are bound to rise, as other races have risen. Already they have taken long strides forward. The fewer obstacles put in their way, the better for them—and for ourselves. As an Anglo Saxon, I would oppose race prejudice for purely selfish reasons, even had I not the slightest sympathy for any of the downtrodden races. We simply invoke a fearful peril, by waging a vain and costly warfare against the inevitable.

As a matter of form, some attention must be paid to the only war cry left to our Negrophobic friends. “*Do you want your sister to marry a nigger!*” It sounds terrible, doesn’t it? Evidently, it is to be inferred that I should resent riding in a car or eating at a restaurant, in the vicinity of any man whom I am not prepared to welcome heartily as a brother-in-law! It will also be necessary, according to this potent argument, to restrict the ballot to those who are eligible matrimonial candidates for the daughters of our “best” citizens. How utterly desperate the Negrophobic is for an excuse, when he is compelled to resort to so transparent a *reductio ad absurdum*! Social justice has absolutely nothing to do with racial amalgamation. Take such measures as tend to the highest development of the individuals of both races; and nature will attend to the problem of personal relations. The impressiveness of the sombre warning must be sensibly diminished, in view of the fact that slavery and race prejudice have between them turned more than half the colored race yellow, by prostitution and concubinage, much lower and far more widespread forms of racial amalgamation than the small number of possible love-matches, which might be the conceivable result of telling the truth, and of treating human beings as they have a right to be treated. And yet the harm done to the “superior race” is infinitesimal, if existent; and many of the mulattoes have proved themselves superior to their white, as well as to their black ancestry. Why raise a sham issue, which has no practical bearing on the subject? Racial amalgamation will or will not take place, under normal conditions, according to whether it is or is not in harmony with the laws of nature; and neither prejudices nor ill-judged statutes can do more than cloud the issue, and make matters worse. Otherwise, evolution is a sham, and civilization a hollow farce.

## CHAPTER VII. THE HIGHER IDEAL.

“For the hope of every creature is the banner that we bear;  
And the world is marching on!”

William Morris: Song of The Workers.

Our rapid survey of what is termed the race question must not be deemed to have exhausted the subject. Race prejudice is not an isolated phenomenon, but a single phase of the old tendency to fetich worship, which our civilization has not yet outgrown. Full mental emancipation is a discouragingly slow process, and beset with many backslidings. Even among the most broad-minded, there are strange survivals of antiquated and grotesquely superstitious beliefs. Voodooism, in some of its aspects, is far from being confined to the wholly or mainly illiterate classes. Men and women of high standing in the business and social world, and even possessed of what passes for an excellent education, actually shiver at the thought of dining in a party of thirteen, of walking under a ladder, or of beginning a journey or launching a ship on Friday; and the United States government itself is weak enough to cater to the last-named absurdity. And yet the very people who are such fools with relation to these particular survivals of barbaric ignorance, are thoroughly intelligent on ordinary topics. In like manner, race prejudice is to be found among many highminded persons, otherwise endowed with splendid mental traits. The severe language employed in some parts of this pamphlet is not to be construed as a personal attack, but as an exposure of the clay feet of the blindly worshipped idol. There are millions of men and women, South as well as North, who are absolutely honest in their delusion. They are too good to be forever deceived by the shallow catchwords and base appeals to passion, wherewith unscrupulous politicians and merciless labor-exploiters seek to beguile them. When the truly honorable and chivalrous sons and daughters of the South realize that through a mistaken sense of honor, they have been made catspaws for the dirty work of a horde of conscienceless grafters, that magnificent section will shake off the nightmare of race prejudice, and enter upon the most glorious period of its history.

To make the issue perfectly plain, and to sum up the positions taken by the opponents of race prejudice, the following theses are subjoined:

1.

All social, economic, religious or political discrimination based solely on color or race is wrong in principle and demoralizing in practice.

2.

To treat a race as inferior is the surest way to make and keep it so.

3.

It is a disgrace to any association of any sort to draw a color line.

4.

A mere difference in color should debar no person from holding any office or position which is fit to be held at all.

5.

Immigration into this or any other country should be open to all races on precisely equal terms.

6.

The question of racial amalgamation is not involved in the demand for equal justice, and may be safely left to nature, without any present attempt to decide on its merits or possible evils.

7.

The present status of a race in no way proves its permanent or even long continued superiority or inferiority as compared with any other race.

8.

The inherent possibilities of a race are to be measured by the highest individual it has produced.

9.

It is unutterably mean, as well as heartlessly cruel, to refuse to extend the hand of fellowship to an individual who is our equal in intelligence, refinement and character, simply because his family or race as a whole is on a much lower level.

10.

An individual who has succeeded in rising superior to his racial environment deserves not only full social recognition at the hands of his equals in culture and intelligence, but exceptional regard on account of his splendid achievement in surmounting the obstacles of birth and early environment.

The hope that civilization can finally banish race prejudice from the Anglo Saxon mind is not a foolish dream. Looking through the course of history, we can trace the ultimate disappearance of delusions as deeply rooted and of as ancient origin. Belief in witchcraft has gone, with a host of other medieval superstitions. Slavery has disappeared, though only in our own time. No false doctrine, however powerfully entrenched in the human mind, can boast of an everlasting tenure. The process of clarifying the minds of men is slow, but sure. Already, there are many hopeful signs. The better element in the South is forging its way to the front, and making its influence felt. The "inferior races," and pre-eminently the colored race in America, are making their mark in every walk of life, and compelling a reluctant admission of their progressive qualities, even in circles where race hatred has been most assiduously cultivated. The future is full of promise. The law of social progress is irresistible. It will triumph here, as in every other department. The pity of it is that men and women should be found, who deliberately set themselves against it, and seek to block its movements. The ideal of a universal human brotherhood is the grandest which it has been given the mind of man to conceive; and there is unutterable sadness in the thought that there should be thousands of men and women in this fair land who have neither part nor lot in this divinest vision of the future, but instead turn from it with horror and aversion.

The great peace movement must sooner or later recognize its most insidious enemy in the doctrine that some races are inherently and eternally inferior to others. The disappearance of race prejudice will deal a final death blow to jingoism. The sense of a common humanity must be rendered universal, before the giant crime of war can be made impossible. Until this fundamental psychological change is brought about, the success of Peace Congresses will be relatively insignificant; and their trifling barriers will continue to be broken down by every mad outbreak of inflamed national vanity or greed. International justice, enlarged human sympathy, a deeper regard for the sacredness of human life, all flow as of course from a full recognition of the unity

of mankind. This is the lesson which the lovers of peace will do well to teach with the utmost emphasis, wherever they carry their most commendable propaganda; for in no other way can they render so effective service to their noble cause.

The presence of a mass of human ignorance and brutalization, white or black, is indeed a sore trial for any people to endure in their very midst; and the South deserves the deepest sympathy in the difficult problem with which she is compelled to grapple. But she in her turn must learn to look facts in the face, and not multiply difficulties for herself by seeking a wrong way out. Race prejudice only makes matters worse. Injustice breeds revenge. Hope stimulates aspiration and progress. No doubt a thousand faults of the undeveloped Negro race are unpleasantly apparent, and fearfully hard to endure. A world of patience is needed. Yet the South has only to open her eyes, in order to see a multitude of encouraging facts. Instead of keeping the Negro severely down, let him be stimulated to rise as high as he proves capable of rising. Instead of a competitor with the white race, let him be adopted as a partner; and both races will reap the benefit. Break down the artificial barriers, which compel an unhealthful herding, and breed ill feeling against the white race.

There is no other solution to the problem. Race prejudice is merely destructive. It offers nothing but a hopeless warfare and a blank pessimism. It has no future, but clings to a dead and decaying past. It has no constructive plan of any sort. The present condition is intolerable; and race prejudice, so far from suggesting a way out, proposes merely to intensify the worst features of the existing evil. Its overthrow must precede the general application of any effective remedy. The issue cannot be dodged. "A nation divided against itself cannot stand." Two races cannot live side by side at daggers' points with one another, and protect civilization, or maintain a healthy state of progress, in either. The perpetual feud destroys what is best and most hopeful in both. Race prejudice must die, that each of the races now cursed by its envenomed influence may truly live.

One other word must be spoken. In relation to the Negro, we of the North and South are prone to forget that we have a debt to pay, which has been accruing for many generations. Why should we who have sinned against the Negro throw all the burden on him, and expect to escape without making any sacrifices? He did not come here of his own accord. The problem was created by ourselves, not by him. The North, the first to sin, was also the first to repent. The South, so long the beneficiary of the original crime, has also a responsibility which cannot be evaded by cursing the victim. For good or for evil, we cannot shirk the results of our ancestors' acts. The Negro is what we have made him; and it is only fair that we should bear the consequences. The ascent to the supreme heights of civilization is not the matter of a day or a generation with any race; and no people is to be inexorably judged by its actual achievement at some particular period. Our ancestors were the rudest savages. They have had time and opportunity for development; and they have reached a relatively high stage of culture, though marred even yet by many crudities and unfortunate survivals. The Negro is today far in advance of the Saxon and Norman brutes who fought over the claims of William the Conqueror; and he has not yet had anything like an opportunity to develop the best that is in him. The highest of his race already stand on a level with the best of ours; and the supposition that the rank and file must forever remain inferior to the average of the white race is purely gratuitous and without scientific or historical justification.

The pettiness of race prejudice is unworthy of a great nation. Our very pride of race itself may fittingly be invoked to calm our fears of successful rivalry. The Anglo Saxon is not such a weak incompetent, that he must trample on the rights of others, in order to maintain his own position.

We can afford to be foremost in exemplifying the principle of unlimited fraternity. The theory of our institutions demands it. The very definition of democracy involves it. The development of our own finer instincts compels it. The poor dreams of empire appeal to the heartless conqueror; and the glories of bloodstained conquest turn to apples of Sodom in his grasp. Infinitely more worthy of a true man or woman is the sublime vision of a day to come when the common good shall be the supreme law of all mankind, and when all nations and races shall be welded together into one great brotherhood. To all human appearance, that day is still far distant; but the measure in which we approach it marks our stage of development. The only function of race prejudice is to block the road; and no man can in any way render greater service to mankind than by devoting his energy toward the removal of this mighty obstacle to our highest hopes. Speed the hour when the Anglo Saxon and the African, the Latin and the Mongolian, the Slav and the Semite, bathed in the sunlight of the great reconciliation, shall be found side by side, laboring in brotherly love and friendly emulation for the achievement of loftier results than the world has yet conceived. The destruction of race prejudice is the beginning of the higher civilization.

The Anarchist Library  
Anti-Copyright



James F. Morton Jr.  
The Curse of Race Prejudice  
1906

Retrieved on April 25, 2025, from  
<https://www.louisecrowleylibrary.org/the-curse-of-race-prejudice>

**[theanarchistlibrary.org](https://theanarchistlibrary.org)**