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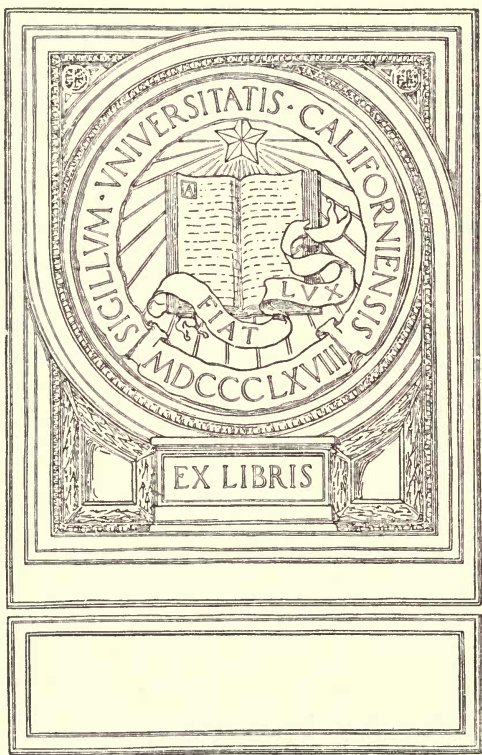


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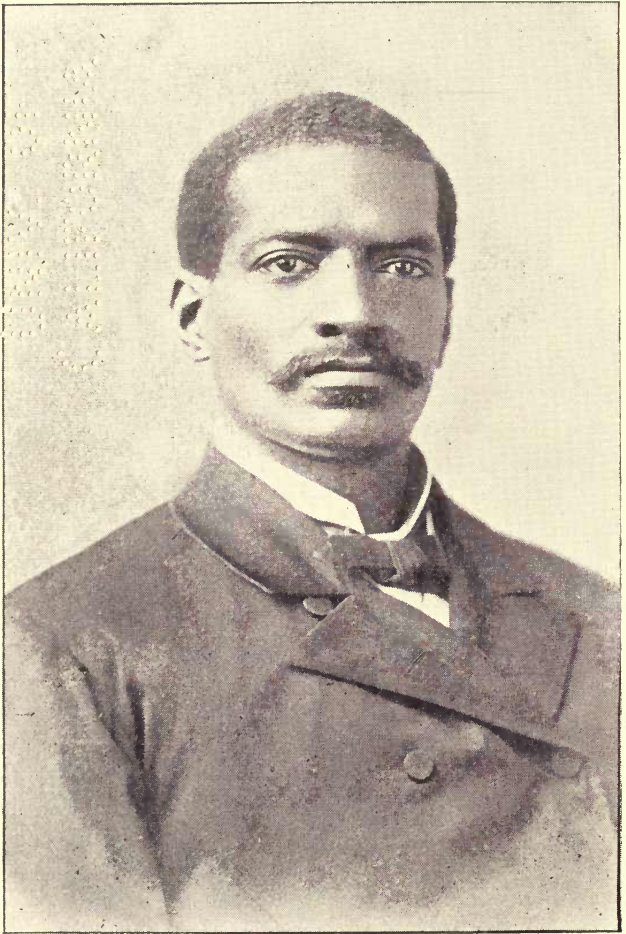
THE PHILOSOPHY
and of
NEGRO SUFFRAGE

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RILEY







James P. Riley

THE
PHILOSOPHY
OF
CALIFORNIA
NEGRO SUFFRAGE

JEROME R. RILEY, M. D.,

AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1897.

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Dedicated to Thinking Men and Women.

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CORRECTIONS.

On page 26, line 14, for "principal," read "principle."

On page 28, third line from bottom, for "David B. Hill," read "W. R. Hearst, proprietor New York Journal."

On page 29, first line, for "Palmer and Turpin," read "Teller and Turpie."

On page 60, line 12, for "our race," read "both races."

On page 68, fourth line from bottom, for "it does," read "they do."

On page 102, first line, for "adding," read "affording."

PREFACE.

IN dedicating this work to thinking men and women the author desires it to be understood that he lays no claim to literary pretensions or distinction. His only purpose being to supply, as fully as he may be able, as a result of his observation and experience, some of the apparent discrepancies, which to his mind exist in the publications of well-known negro leaders and writers, and to supply some of the essential points, thus enabling thinking men and women to comprehend more accurately our true status. It has been the object of the author to base, as far as possible, his conclusions upon original investigations and experience, and trusts that the work may accomplish, in some degree, the purpose for which it is designed.

JEROME R. RILEY.

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THE
PHILOSOPHY OF NEGRO SUFFRAGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE genius and intrepidity of American manhood and vigor is to begin at the beginning—*de novo*,—as often as it becomes necessary, in order that a proper starting—a proper basis may be secured. This proposition the writer holds in much estimation, as primarily essential. Moreover, he hopes and believes that through such a beginning we shall be better able and equipped to realize some of the blessings of American citizenship, with a fuller measure of popular privileges all along the line. With no record back of us demonstrating our capacity for successful self-government, the most philosophic question for us to consider is: how we

can the better show ourselves competent to render assistance in placing the common and popular rights of the race upon a sure and safe foundation, making, however, no mistake as to our real purpose and ultimate object.

The most casual and ordinary observant of human affairs, since our emancipation from the institution of American slavery, could not have failed to note that whatever may be said of parties, respecting their interest in and feeling for us as suffragants, its unpopularity has always shown itself through the cracks in every section of this country, whatever the exterior pretensions might have disclosed.

If such contentions be true—and we believe them susceptible of proof—true philosophy at once suggests careful investigation as to its cause and a possibility of its improvement.

At this late day we deem it unnecessary to discuss, as is common among most of our writers, whether or not Mr. Lincoln was in favor of saving the Union with or without slavery, or how many soldiers who went into the army to fight for the Union were demo-

crats or republicans, or whether it was their patriotism, their love for the Union, or their dislike for the institution of American slavery as it then existed. The present, the passing, and the future are what we have to deal with. Our best energies and capabilities are to be exerted in this direction.

In launching the Great Eastern it was found difficult to set her afloat, when her captain cried out, "Who can push a pound?" Such are our feelings in entering into this discussion, regardless of party bias or affiliation. What can we, as a democrat, do, however feeble, to aid in a successful launching of our race interest?

It must be borne in mind that one of the great causes operating against us reaches further back even than our long servitude during American slavery,—antedating,—which must carry us to our ancestral development and traditional history in search of some record upon which to found basic principles upon which to build a structure which shall stand the wear and tear of ages. If, however, our great great ancestors have left us no record

to speak of for civilization and improvement, our plain duty, therefore, is to set about as best we may to make a record for ourselves. It should be such a one as to gain us standing before the people,—the Court of Last Resort,—bearing in mind that the dominant race in this country is very nearly evenly divided between the two great parties. In order to attract the attention of the Supreme Bar, our case must be fully made up, and well too, from every point of view. Moreover, our conduct must be of such a marked character as not only to attract the attention of this Court, but such as to gain its sympathy and interest as well, that an abiding and lasting faith in our integrity and honesty of purpose may be established.

Let us show clearly to this Court that we are quite capable of rising to the superb level of independent and logical thinking men and women. This done, the initial step will have been taken looking to the practical solution of the race problem. Thereafter we can trust much to the natural growth of time and attendant circumstances as they arise. If, in

our daily intercourse, our daily avocations, business or political affiliations, we may be brought into a closer touch with any member of this Court, it can be of no detriment to us if by this contact we shall show that we will bear close scrutiny and inspection.

In the study of European history, especially that of Russia, the student has doubtless been struck with the remarkable fertility and resourcefulness of that great empire, the great variety of its products, the diversity of its climate as well as its soil, making it, through its great natural advantages and resources, independent, practically, of its great rivals and neighbors, thus enabling her to solve many problems, even perplexing ones. A growl from the Russian Bear often causes her rivals to halt and even subside, her inherent strength, power, and greatness being at all times manifest from her own resources and resourcefulness. If diversity in one direction will solve problems, why not give its sufficiency a trial in another?

We feel, reasoning from cause and effect, that it should accomplish much in another

toward giving us standing and security both in the industrial and political fields, for the reason that it is more likely to bring us into contact with the various shades of sentiment, primarily favorable or unfavorable, throughout the country; but the sentiment which we seek to interest in our behalf most is the dominant sentiment of that section where we reside, rather than that where we do not live.

Through the failure of negro suffrage in the District of Columbia and in every republican southern state as well, bringing repression to our energies and discouragement to our industries, and, very properly, distrust of our capable management of affairs requiring real qualities of head and heart to successfully cope with the intricate affairs of municipal government, in order that civilization might not digress, but its momentum be preserved.

CHAPTER II.

SUFFRAGE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WE find that a popular error seems to pervade the minds of many which does an injustice to the present colored republican leaders in the District of Columbia, Mr. Carson and Mr. Chase. These gentlemen can not and should not be held responsible for our failures here, in that, at that time, they were mere followers. The real gilt-edged leaders of that day were the late Hon. Fred Douglass, Hon. John M. Langston, Capt. O. S. B. Wall, Carter Stewart, Sr., Randall Bowie, Henry Johnson, and others. Whatever responsibility attaches to our failure in this direction must be charged to the leaders of that day and not to the leaders of to-day. Their leadership is but the legitimate legacy left them. Speakers and essayists of our race

seem to deplore our lack of leadership that we have none. We are, perhaps, a little impatient of results in this direction. Our conditions have not been favorable for development of the real qualities of leadership. In this we mean no reflection on our development and progress since freedom nor yet any notions we may have obtained during slavery along this line. It is quite common for our great leaders to refer to our long servitude as a reason or excuse for not knowing and doing ; being blind to the fact that whatever we are, much or little, and under whatever degree of suffering we may have endured, has been developed under the system of American slavery, for back of us we find our ancestry, on one side or the other, more often on both, though kings and princesses of the realm, were but barbarians.

We are making no criticism upon our ancestry, for in their disposing of their sons and daughters, whether through trade or barter of whatever character, they acted, perhaps, under the best light as they understood things.

We, however, to-day understand better than they.

While undergoing tutelage, the writer, from many years of observation and contact, believes that the most successful leadership should be those who are the most capable of leading regardless of party predilection or color. My own experience has been that white leadership is preferable, in that it is the most capable from its long training, especially when it possesses the strong sense of fairness, freedom, and equality under the law. What I wish to convey is better illustrated by the action of Governor Garland of Arkansas when he was governor of that State. Mr. Furbush, a colored man, having been elected sheriff of Lee County, as an independent but a strong supporter of the governor, some white democrats, after the Garland government was safely launched, while he was handling the race problem with signal ability and success, called upon him and urged him to remove Furbush from the office he held. His first inquiry was: "Is there anything against his moral character or capacity?" Receiving a

negative reply, promptly responded, "I can't remove him; he was our staunch supporter, during our whole trouble; he had, necessarily, to make some sacrifices and bear reproaches from his own people, and I shall sustain him." As enrolling clerk of the legislature, we happened, at that time, as we often were during that session, to be near him and heard the above conversation. From such a man as Governor Garland, we neither expected nor received any ante-election or catchy epistles, which are too often meaningless and deceptive, even if weighty, relying rather upon post-election performances, which were never wanting.

What is true of Governor Garland can truthfully be said of many statesmen throughout the South who are desirous of aiding us and securing a proper basis in solving the problem of a harmonious and satisfactory relationship.

The vote of the Hon. Clifton R. Breckinridge in the Board of Aldermen of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, once made Col. Ferd. Havis, by reason of his character and ability and

knowledge of municipal affairs, acting mayor for the time being, which was a very high compliment to that gentleman, differing, as he did, in politics from our American Minister to Russia.

We all partake, largely, of our early impressions and environments. When a lad at school in Canada, in the study of political economy and the science of government, we were led to observe the gradations through which their leaders and statesmen passed. First, we had the common councilman, next the deputy reeve, then reeve, after which legislative and parliamentary honors were considered in order. Acting under such convictions, we submit that it is a small wonder, therefore, that some of us should reject party policy and leadership which sprung up spontaneously, almost, leading us away from the safety line and landing us too uncomfortably near the danger line.

We have no disposition to turn back the dial of the clock, but we do desire that it shall report accurately the time of the day. If it be five in the morning let the clock strike, the

same when it is midnight, and at whatever hour, so that no one need cry out, "Watchman, what of the night?"

Reasoning from this point of view, the conclusions of the writer we deem fully justified.

In the Southern States, where all our interest lay, our republican leaders were making no better showing for us than here in the District of Columbia, giving no better guarantee for the future than our republican leaders had been able to vouchsafe for us here, besides which, some medium by which a more harmonious relationship, which had become greatly strained, was imperative. Under the new conditions, as freemen and citizens the old relationship of master and slave could not exist. In the writer's best judgment and opinion, a peace basis lay only in the direction of diversity of suffrage along democratic lines and under democratic auspices and leadership with the hope of stemming the current of popular disapproval then setting in so strong against us, North, East, and West, as well as in the South, where all our interest and hopes

lay, then and for all time. Moreover, we desired our citizenship to become a positive reality—a living fact—meeting the approval and respect of the dominant race at our homes. It has been a matter of surprise, even marvelous, that, after the failure of negro suffrage here, and all along the line through our incompetency, if not downright dishonesty, that a thorough discussion of the causes leading to such failure was not had on the part of our leaders—casting up accounts, thereby relieving some serious apprehensions engendered, as to our total unfitness for self government.

Believing as we do in that cardinal principle of the democratic party, "home rule," we feel that negro democracy in the District has had a serious setback by reason of non-resident recognition in official appointments, and we venture the assertion that such is the verdict of our citizens regardless of race or party, save a very trifling exception here and there scarcely worth adverting to. However, here as elsewhere, whether the appointment be that of a resident or non-resident, character, integrity, and ability receive their just reward through universal commendation of official conduct.

We commend the press of our city and our most efficient local civil service board for their scrutiny of, and demand for, high character and integrity in official appointees in the District, and it has, we are happy to say, never been on a color basis. Especially we desire to commend Editor Chase of "The Washington Bee," whose sting we have often felt, for his determined, persistent, and consistent demand that character and virtue be exemplified in those selected for negro representation. Even at great odds he has carried on his efforts, and should always be gratefully remembered by this moral community.

Adverting for a moment to our local civil service board, we desire to commend that eminent divine, Rev. Dr. Alexander McKay Smith, that inveterate foe of immorality and vice wherever found, whether in high places or in low places, for his efforts toward improvement or removal of officials whose character is questioned or suspected. The efficient secretary of the board, F. L. Siddons, Esq., deserves special mention in this connection.

The real purpose of negro democracy, as the writer understands it, is to counteract and

divert a false basis, a wrong tendency leading to false conclusions inimical to the true philosophy of suffrage. Our reliability and stability is oftentimes questioned, and not wholly without good reason on some occasions, as we shall show. While the appointment of a very honorable non-resident colored gentleman to an important office in the district was being considered by the Senate some seven or eight years ago, one of our recognized great leaders of that time, speaking of the appointment and nomination, remarked with emphasis to the writer that he was for home rule; "besides, it is embodied in your platforms. Whether it is or not, I am for the principle of home rule." His emphatic manner impressed us most strikingly as to his sincerity, as much so as any such statements made by Hon. James L. Norris or Hon. B. H. Warner. Much to our surprise, a few years later we found this same great leader, for some not yet revealed reason, espousing the claims of a man who was a non-resident, to the same office. Our conduct should be such as never to bring our integrity in question

and divert a false basis, a wrong tendency leading to a false conclusion.

Whatever sacrifices we may make we should be amply compensated, if through our efforts, with whatever talent, virtue, and morality we may possess.

A single step taken, remedial and beneficial, directed first of all to character establishment, in order that our material prosperity might follow and a firmer basis take a firmer hold. The writer is far from believing that all the virtue is reposed in any one party. Our plain duty is, as far as possible, to keep interest and principal together. By so doing we will be the better able to become potent factors in strengthening the force and purifying the fountain of our political and material action. Certainly our great republican negro leaders cannot hope or even desire to see the great mass of our race continue in this happy-go-lucky state in which we are to-day, for in such relation we are merely drift-wood in the great body politic—going out with the reflux tide with no harbor in view—going whither no one knows or cares.

When a lad in Canada, standing on the banks of Tiber creek, during a great freshet at the North Buxton mill-dam, Mr. Peter Straith, the Scotch owner of the mill, shouted out to his men: "Raise the dam. It is only driftwood that will go through." In an instant came back the reply: "Fifty feet of hewn timber has just gone through." The owner quickly responded: "Shut down the dam! Shut down the dam!" While we are but driftwood we may go through and on to the sea or where nobody cares, but as we become hewn timbers, full-grown men, partaking of all the vigor of real manhood, of principal and interest, entering into the fabric of our country's structure, will we be factors worth considering. Some such legacy as this we must leave to our children and those who are to follow if we would do our duty to ourselves and the times in which we live.

Moreover, certain conditions are primarily essential in the development of negro leadership—time, circumstances, and conditions which should apply with equal force to us as with the Anglo-Saxon, if not a little more so,

lacking, as we do, many of the moral and traditional elements which enter into true and lasting civilization. Remembering all the while, that whatever impressions we have gained respecting civilization and improvement have had their origin in servitude and attendant conditions which were, in many respects, too meager to count upon in a correct and judicious rendering, consequently the writer submits, that if these premises are true and correct in fact, as he conscientiously believes, the circumstances, the times, or conditions do not warrant the assumption of our negro republican leaders, that as such they are really needed.

Believing that white leadership, in the very nature of things, is preferable, by reason of its long and severe tutelage in this direction, representing long experience and great capabilities, every shade of political action and activity, men of high moral standing and fairness, whose leadership we might safely follow.

Why not such men as David B. Hill, ex-Secretary Whitney, Speaker Crisp, Minister Breckinridge, A. H. Garland, Arthur P. Gor-

man, Senators Palmer and Turpin, and many others of this stand, representing the democracy. Among the republicans, such as ex-Speaker Reed, General Harrison, Allison, Col. Hepborn, Governors Morton and McKinley, General Alger, all representing their true party standards. Why not accept leadership from these gentlemen?

Better no leadership at all, than one whose reputation is notoriously tarnished should be forced upon us from either side.

The almost fatal wounds which suffrage received in this District, because of notoriously bad leadership, after the lapse of nearly a quarter of a century, have not been healed. Here the damage was wrought; here the repairs should take place. The curative effects of remedial measures should be made strikingly apparent. This cannot be done, however, by masquerading under the leadership such as that which carried us down; but a new leadership, such as is embodied in the high character and eminent ability and professional standing of Dr. Robert Reyburn. Even he, for the next quarter of a century,

cannot do more than ward off severe criticism, against return to the suffrage period such as obtained under former negro leaders. It is, indeed, a heavy weight that Dr. Reyburn is carrying. He needs every assistance from the advocates of suffrage. They can aid him much in making the burden lighter. Will they do it? Indeed, he is making a sacrifice that few men, with as little encouragement, would dare undertake; and were it not for his high character and unblemished reputation, he long since would have gone down with this load. It would be a deserved compliment to him were he unanimously named as a delegate to represent his party to the next National Convention. Will they do it? We find that there are many colored men, as well as white, in the District, who want suffrage only as it shall come to them in a qualified form. They seem to feel the necessity of some restrictions as to its use and scope; feeling that restriction would bring us into closer touch with the business interest and dominant sentiment of the community, thus demonstrating that the wound was such as to

require some reapproachment before a complete restriction was possible. Moreover, it is apparently obvious that our negro republican leaders must signally fail to meet the requirements and obligations of the hour.

CHAPTER III.

NEGRO SUFFRAGE IN THE SOUTHERN STATES — SOME OF THE EVIL RESULTS POINTED OUT — THE REMEDIES SUGGESTED — THE CAUSE OF ITS FAILURE — THE NEGRO LEADERSHIP — MISS IDA B. WELLS AND HER CRUSADERS CRITICISED.

IF it be true that our ablest and highest type of negro leadership has been largely centered in the District of Columbia, and the conditions being favorable for its highest development, and yet failed, what must be said of the states where this leadership was rather of a secondary and advisory character, yet of paramount interest to all the citizens in the maintenance of popular representative and progressive government.

This brings us to consider negro leadership during this period, carrying with it, largely, all the responsibilities and requirements of

local self-government,—state, county, and municipal. Was their equipment sufficient for so great an undertaking? Let us see the carrying capacity of our craft. Was it well equipped, properly manned, well rigged—was it, in short, seaworthy for so important a voyage? Where was it built? When was it launched? True philosophy suggests and demands such an inquiry. If, as has been stated, our knowledge of government had taken its origin in servitude, any contention as to our competent control and management of the craft would seem, on its face, absurd and ridiculous. The ignorance displayed by those claiming to be men of sense, holding, as they did, the interest of eight million of our race in their keeping, was remarkable and even marvelous.

Especially was this true in their precipitous purpose to “go it alone,” regardless of, and, in fact, independent of moral, material, and dominant intellectual forces with which they had to deal, and this too without a single day’s training for the duties in which our

whole future and that of our children were involved. Apparently, we were sowing to the wind and but reaped the whirlwind. Our failure, therefore, was humiliating and complete all along the line. Our leaders had put into our hands keen-edged tools which we knew not how to use neither wisely nor well. Our weapons of defense were illy chosen,—good for the day only. For these leaders to have selected for us such weapons,—weapons we could not intelligently handle and use,—only magnified their own ignorance, leaving us, as they did, to bear the ills and reproaches and even violence incident to such leadership.

A leadership that taught and caused us to neglect the cultivation of our corn, potatoes, tobacco, and cotton, and incidental family requirements, in order that this leadership might reach desired prominence and gain, while our families suffered, was most reprehensible, if, indeed, not criminal on their part; for the reason that some of them, at least, knew better. Bringing into prominence and power as state and county officials, members of the legislature, often presenting sights such as to

cause the gods to smile, who were to make laws for a proud people with hundreds of years of civilization behind them, thereby ruining, as they did, so many able-bodied men who were better fitted for the fields, the blacksmith shop, and the carpenter's bench. How many able-bodied men were thus ruined will never be accurately known. Now, as then, our weapons of defense must be well chosen and properly maintained. What was good policy then is good policy still. Our pathway under this leadership was being confined to very narrow limits.

The favorable impressions made upon many good people in every section of this and other countries during our long servitude was seemingly taking on a sudden departure, to prevent which, in our opinion, is the mission of the negro democracy and all others seemingly interested in the promotion of our well-being. The apparent severance of the ties which existed between master and slave necessitated a re-approachment upon other lines, the basis of which should be peace founded upon citizenship, mutual confidence, and hearty good

will,—one which shall stand the wear and tear of ages. Through our citizenship and intelligence we seek to give honest impressions as to our present needs and passing requirements in our effort to evolve a higher state of civilization. The co-operation and support of our white friends in this effort must be secured. The best elements entering into our make-up as good citizens must be made manifest. In this we will strengthen that essential reapproachment, making it easy of accomplishment.

It is a mistake to suppose that it is any neck-and-neck race between us and that of the dominant race of the Southland, with the whites rapidly tiring. A number of years ago, when in Nebraska, an enterprising young woman from the Eastern States requested myself and father to assist her in locating a homestead, carrying with it the conventional dirt house and the driving of stakes. Reaching the point selected by her, while in the act of setting the stakes, we were surprised by a farmer who, after finding out our mission, told us to move further down the line, remarking

that his line reached beyond the visible stake ; that the next vacant homestead was further beyond and a little below. The young lady not being satisfied with his mere statement, he at once requested us to accompany him below a bluff where we were brought into full view of a cultivated homestead, a substantial dirt house, stables, and other improvements, a good growing crop, satisfying and convincing to the most skeptic, not only of his priority right of preëmption, but the improvement and development of a long and progressive residence. Precisely in such relation do we stand to the dominant race at the South and elsewhere, whatever we may think or however we may feel respecting this or that class of white citizens of one section or the other ; their record, as a race, for civilization, statesmanship, and of progress, is made up, safely anchored, and must stand.

Prudence, therefore, suggests that we should regulate ourselves accordingly. The intrepidity of the Anglo-Saxon race has been the wonder of this and of all ages. We verily

believe that if the North Pole shall ever be discovered he will be found astride of it.

The fittest in government and for government must and should survive. Truth and candor, on the part of the writer, compel the admission of this proposition. Capital and intelligence may, at all times, be relied upon to take care of themselves. Not even superior numbers, backed by ignorance and poverty, can be reckoned upon to make a formidable resistance to their progress. This we believe, upon general principles, to be correct. Hence the survival of the fittest in government as in individuals is best for each and all and will always prevail. Let us, then, as a race, choose wisely and well our weapons of defense. They might well be both offensive and defensive so long as they aid us in all laudable efforts in securing for ourselves a right beginning. Strength is most necessary; strength on the right of us, strength on the left, and in the center.

While negro leadership in the Southern States, as in the District of Columbia, to which we have already alluded, was a signal

failure, yet, in the South there has been less disposition to deal harshly with us than in the District, where, under a republican congress and president the abolition of suffrage was most effective and complete.

Apologists in the District, who do us harm and seek to conceal the real facts and merit of the case, tell us that in taking away suffrage from the negro it was taken away from the whites as well, and that on race lines it was impartial. Precisely so, if one does not wish to consider below the surface; but a hasty glance at the District pay-roll displays the fact unmistakably that the whites manage to take good care of themselves, suffrage or no suffrage. Let us admit that suffrage in the District was taken away from us because of irresponsible negro voting. All this time, we in the South have been reaping some of the advantages of suffrage; especially so through the advice and action of negro democracy, in their encouragement of diversity in suffrage on lines suggested by dominant and democratic leadership; which to us is a point gained, meeting as it does the approval of the court

before which we are pleading. We must not lose sight of the fact that our real purpose, through our well-chosen weapons of defense, is to secure to ourselves a peace basis, honorable alike to both races. Such achievement, through a successful reapproachment, should be considered as always being in order, which through time and the logic of events, will bring its own reward. We, by this discussion, are seeking to bring no alarm, but to state facts and conditions which history and our judgment must approve.

A colored member of Congress, in the presence of the writer once stated to a friend that Mr. Boutelle of Maine had applauded him on account of some remark he had just made in a speech on the floor of the House. We remarked to this friend, after the departure of the colored member, that he might have, perhaps, said something clever and apt, since from our point Maine issues no certificate of election to negro members of Congress, not even showing a disposition of encouraging an influx of negro labor into her borders; that it would have been more apt and better statesmanship

to have timed his remarks in such a manner as to have brought applause from a member from North or South Carolina, Louisiana, or Mississippi, rather than the one from the Maine member; and yet, perhaps, he was excusable, because our horizon of vision is yet limited, our discernment or discrimination is not enlarged to a degree sufficient to deal logically with difficult and delicate points, though involving our own present and future well-being, yet, in putting ourselves in certain positions, we should be able to perform a man's or a statesman's part. In advancing our interest we should be able to take advantage of whatever circumstances or conditions that may arise, through which our interest might be advanced and some strength gained, though counting only one in our favor, which is a good count, since it oftentimes determines the result.

Many of us have doubtless observed, especially in our younger days, that in handling a new gun we are never quite certain of the accuracy of our aim until we have charged and discharged it a few times, notwithstanding

our expert use and familiarity with the old fowling piece, experience and practice, therefore, being essential in this as in other matters. In the acquisition of this knowledge much time is required both for its practice and a correct study of its effect. As in small matters, so in great; reaching even to legislative functions where much greater responsibility centers.

Our dependences and responsibilities, our present and future hope alike bid us so to adjust our home, material, and living relations as to gain for us more strength, strength of character, giving us anchorage, defensible, safe, and secure, at once relied on and reliable. In the enlargement of our ideas and a readjustment of our basis of action, intelligence is the focus and must regulate them. It possesses all the material forces. If, therefore, as many of our leaders practically assert, we have no other or higher privilege than to follow these self-styled leaders, then we have no need of intelligence; no proper claim to individual responsibility in governmental affairs, and had as well now bid farewell to our schools; that learning is a myth. The writer, however, believes

differently. In order to outride the storm which we are necessarily forced to encounter, through our relations to society as freemen and citizens, the highest capabilities of each individual must be brought into action from every point of view we may philosophically reason.

It is claimed that in some states there exists an abridgment or restriction, in a sense, in the free exercise of the ballot. If this be true that such a restriction does obtain, let us seek to find the cause, if there be one. We cannot have great difficulty in finding one, if we reason correctly — from cause and effect; tracing it, directly, to the period of our control in the South, especially in a state like South Carolina, where we were absolute in every way, from alderman to governor; hence, if suffrage has been seriously wounded, through our own acts, improvement and security must take place there and by those who played a part or assisted in bringing suffrage into disrepute. If, under the then leadership and our blind following, we have disgraced suffrage — and who will say we did not — a duty we owe to

ourselves and to society, as well, compels a frank avowal of the truth and a setting about on our part to make amends, to make proper reparation, which must be done where the wound was inflicted and from whence complaints are made.

It is only necessary to enquire into the present value of the state bonds and other securities where we held undisputed sway, and compare that with the values of those times to convince us of our own misrule and mismanagement. It is no wonder that the day of reckoning came and came swiftly.

Reformation in civil government is as necessary to one party as to the other. It is, therefore, to our interest to enter into the same spirit, through a diversity of our suffrage, in order to repair the damage we have wrought. The conditions for our improvement and development are more favorable in the South than in any other section. Whatever set-back that may have come to us has been through our own fault and the teachings and leadership of those who led us, some of whom, although remote from these times,

might be cited as characterless scoundrels, their prominence at all times being prejudicial to our progress and growth, and the development of that friendly relationship between the races—capital and labor of those sections. Hence the manifest propriety of a successful reapproachment was most urgently demanded, looking to a full and fair establishment of a permanent peace basis and a proper and correct selection of our weapons of defense. We repeat, that the fittest in government should and will always survive. We cannot hope to attain to the full capacity of leaders through a hop-skip-and-jump fashion, nor yet by league strides. Our progress must be steady, steady — by easy strides — step, step, step by step. The same routes traversed by white leaders must be gone over by us, else what will our leadership be? A miserable failure.

An old colored man asking for a quart of whisky from his merchant on Saturday night, was asked if less would not do him, when he replied: “No, I want to keep the Sabbath tomorrow.” “So you could not keep it on less,”

was suggested. "Oh, yes," he replied, "but how would it be kept?" In the same way we can produce leaders, but what kind would they be? No better than the former under the same conditions.

In following the negro leadership of those times we found ourselves environed with difficulties which our ignorance and poverty was unable to compass. The writer has felt, for some time, that Miss Ida B. Wells and her crusaders are doing us much harm in bringing us into more or less hostility and antagonism with the dominant race, where we are to live, die, and be buried, without bringing to us the slightest equivalent, which, to our notion, renders the whole crusade of doubtful propriety so far as anything beneficial accrues to us. Long since we went on record against and touching every species of lawlessness and violence, and at the proper place, where the complained-of wrongs existed. If we really seek redress, our grounds and reasons must be set forth with all the discretion and discrimination at home, and not away from home.

While boards of trade and other commercial bodies, and many white presbyteries and other Christian bodies, have, by their action, deprecated and deplored violence in every form and in every section, yet I do not recall of having seen or heard of a single minister of a negro church or from our colored leaders calling upon the negro men of the race to so live and conduct themselves that no suspicion can attach to them of the crimes alleged to have been committed. Miss Wells could, we think, better devote her time and talents to a much better cause, than trying to, from long range, stir up strife among the whites of the South against the colored people of that section.

If she would start a crusade against the crimes and immoralities which we know too well exist among our race; if she would devote her energies in teaching better and higher morals among us, in our homes and in the communities where we are in large numbers, she would be doing a service much needed.

In any community where a low state of industry prevails, a low state of morals obtains,

thus proving demoralizing to our inherent interest, growth, and the development of our best qualities.

The action of Miss Wells and those engaged in this uncalled-for crusade, is more liable to occasion greater mischief, resulting in more harm and permanent injury to us than those they seem to desire to check, without, at any time, suggesting a single possible remedy, or the bringing to us strength at home, where most needed and most desired.

We doubtless have grievances, in many respects embarrassing, oppressive, and of a serious nature, exasperating and offensive. These, however, are found to exist in almost every state in the Union, being allied to and interwoven in the adjustment of a proper relationship which should obtain between races.

The late Right Reverend Bishop John M. Brown, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, informed the writer that even the church, through its pulpit, had been used as an instrument of political tyranny against those who had chanced to differ from republican negro leaders as to methods of proce-

dure, looking to the betterment and improvement of the mass of our race.

We have, however, reason to hope that such malign influences, whether religious or political, or of whatever character, will, under the operation of more liberal and enlightened teachings, soon and forever cease. This can be done, very largely, through negro democracy and independent thinking men and women, who should be developing, as a heritage of human progress.

In seeking the co-operation and good will of the dominant race in all our laudable efforts to attain to higher civilization, let us, in their willingness to go with us a furlong, meet them half-way—rather, go a mile, if needs be, and by every honest endeavor, for the good of each and of all, the softening of race hostilities—as one of the greatest factors in the formation of a proper and lasting sentiment, which will, by reason of its strength, most commend itself to friend and foe alike; so that in the phenomena of our make-up, no cloud or mystery can obscure it.

Having no distinction of ancestry on our own account, our plain duty is to follow a leadership which represents the higher qualities of law and order, else we must be left to live or die as the fates might decree.

Right here it strikes the writer to suggest that some of our negro republican leaders are laying claim to ancestral distinction a little mite too early, placing us in an attitude of awkward and doubtful defense. The mere dealing in fancy flights of refinement and aristocratic notions scarcely meets the requirements.

The feeling being yet opportune for a favorable reapproachment, any act on our part which subverts or reverses this sentiment is harmful and operates to our detriment. The community standing we must seek can only be secured through the confidence the dominant race may have in us. Without this confidence the progress of the negro race in this country must and will be retrograding. Our own efforts must be brought into requisition if we would surmount these and like formidable difficulties. What we are to be in this

country is in our own hands,— we can make it what we would; but it cannot be done on the lines laid down by our negro republican leaders or by Miss Wells and those who are assisting her in her “mission” of stirring up strife between the races, which will require time to obliterate.

We have been reproached and even ridiculed by the negro republican leaders on account of our defense of and long continuance in the democratic party; even by party friends of both races on account of the lack of recognition received by us from President Cleveland.

Some years ago, while the great post-office at Glasgow, Scotland, was on fire and the engines were playing upon the flames, a shrill voice was heard to cry out from the crowd below: “Play on the bag from Inverness! Play on the bag from Inverness!” This was startling. Upon inquiry it was found that the mail-bag from Inverness contained a letter for this man. He was willing to see the whole building, together with its great interests, consumed if the bag containing his

letter was saved. So while we have felt and do feel deeply wounded, and, we submit, not without reason, owing to our attitude as a negro democrat, being less able, without assistance, to protect ourselves, our position having brought us into direct antagonism with the negro republican leaders and their followers; being forced to beg the crumbs falling from their tables, this failure of recognition has brought to us great embarrassment and done us great injustice. Yet the lines we have traced for a quarter of a century we shall seek to follow to the end, being thereby convinced that they carry along with principal and interest of our future welfare, growth, and development, regardless of our personal welfare.

If personal recognition be contingent upon the destruction or even impairing in any way the structure we have sought to build, rather let personal recognition go,—perish the letter from “Inverness,” and save the great structure and its contents of valuables.

Few politicians will place their allies, or allow them to be placed, be they white or

black, in a false attitude, in order that they may be the more easily assailed. No great man, no great statesman, would do so. Their sense of fairness, of justice, and humanity can always be relied upon. With all great men, all broad-minded men, the right of might is always subordinated to the claims of the weak, defenseless, yet friendly allies.

Our chief vocation in the past, without the whys or wherefores, has been to follow our negro republican leaders therefore, leading us invariably to outside interests, rather than to home influences, requirements, and duties.

The pacific nature of our moral and mental characteristics should be brought into full play, leaving nothing undone on our part not only to correct the abuses and misfortunes of the past, but lead us to a more promising future.

In our opinion the great fame of Fred'k Douglass, which has safe anchorage and must stand, rests, rather, upon his anti-slavery record than any subsequent leadership of his.

Some years ago the writer, on being re-elected President of the John M. Palmer

Democratic Club of the District of Columbia, the oldest negro club in point of organization in the country, delivered the following address, which may not be out of place in this work:—

Dr. Jerome R. Riley, being elected president, spoke as follows:

“Members of the John M. Palmer Democratic Club of the District, while thanking you most heartily for this evidence of your confidence and esteem, I promise, God willing, to do all in my power to further its interests and promote its objects.

“Before touching briefly some of the causes governing our past and present political action and affiliation, you will, I trust, in the interest of the cause we seek to promote and advance, and of truth, which demagogues may seek to pervert, pardon me a moment’s personal reference:

“Early in the year 1874, with a republican President and Congress, overwhelmingly so in both branches, under a republican state government in Arkansas, and in a county largely so, and is yet, I was holding the office as a republican of county physician and acting coroner, which I endeavored to fill to the best

of my ability and to the satisfaction of the people. How far I succeeded in this I am willing to leave to prominent republicans who were leaders in the political action and activities of their party now living in this city. Indeed, I am quite willing that all concerned, of any party, shall render verdict on this point.

“After a fair and conscientious study of men, methods, and measures, governing the two parties in all their bearings, and with the single purpose of promoting peace and the welfare of both races, I was reluctantly forced to sever the ties, and urged a division of our votes on other than mere party lines, right or wrong, as a necessity if negro suffrage were to become not to say popular, but even tolerant, which can only be brought about by a division of the colored voters. ‘A race problem,’ serious and unmistakable, had to be met. While ‘four-fifths of the people of the globe may or may not be of darker hue than the able representative of our race,’ who makes this assertion, yet the conditions in this country are such that the problem is here to stay until solved, gainsay it as one may.

“The failure, yea, the total collapse of suffrage in this district on the account of irre-

sponsible negro voting under our highest and ideal leadership, gave ample opportunity for questioning our fitness for its use. The republican administration came up promptly to the relief of the people here by abolishing it. The grievances in the South were more serious, threatening, and urgent, but minus the remedy that obtained here.

“The worst feature of the negro’s trouble has been from a false rating which has been given us by our would-be friends, by valuing us by our future possibility, or judging the whole by a few ‘lumps of leaven’ within our fold, who have made most remarkable progress in learning, literature, and even statesmanship; and as it is not the whole that need a physician, neither is it such as these by which the wants, capabilities, and needs of the whole should be summed up, thus placing us in a position where more is demanded than should be expected of us. A forced growth, without the proper means of self-reliance, self-sustenance, or self-dependence. Our troubles may all have arisen ‘from his two-hundred years’ servitude in this, and ages of barbarism in another country,’ as one of our number has lately said, but they are just as real all the same, and must be met. The situation demanded either

a change of political leadership on our part, or a readjustment of political action, and upon other principles had we been wise at that time. Failing, then, we had to go it alone. The old and weather-beaten refrain, 'United we stand, divided we fall,' and the 'Negro who votes with the democrats is an enemy of his race,' would not suffice. Something more was wanted. We found that in our unity lay our weakness; that the mere strength of numbers was brittle; real strength could only come by a diversion of our acts of suffrage.

"To illustrate further my ideas of a divided or dual policy by our people, let me refer to the division of leadership in celebrating our Emancipation Day. Every close observer must have noted a progress in the manner in which that day has been celebrated since a diversity of opinion has arisen, though sometimes fierce and bitter, yet it has had a tendency to eliminate some of the most objectionable features from that display. While one faction has been watching the other with eager eye to criticism, many a foolish custom has been lopped off that always obtains without opposition while under the guardianship of a one-man power. Now more intelligent methods

have crept in through the breach that a divided opinion has made possible ; for instance, instead of having 'four queens in a pack,' as heretofore, this year there were none.

"The evolution of our social, political, and industrial relations, therefore, are matters of the gravest concern. A diversity in industrial relations solves the problem for us or any other people. Why not in the political sphere? While we do not ascribe mercenary motives to our leaders, yet their leadership has been mischievous, misleading, and disastrous. Moreover, they must have read real history to very little purpose not to know that intelligence and wealth dominated legislation and commerce the world over.

"Let me give a single example of what was the rule in the South, in the county of Jefferson, one of the richest in the state of Arkansas, in which was situated the city of Pine Bluff, ranking, I believe, next to Memphis as a cotton market. Here the varied interests of legislation affecting a rich and populous community came up for consideration. At the head of the republican legislative ticket in 1875 was Mr. Ned Hill, colored, who could neither read nor write, but whose fighting weight was two hundred pounds, drunk or

sober. His ticket was overwhelmingly elected. At that time he, or even Judas Iscariot, if branded with the party stamp, could just as easily have defeated Gov. Garland or Major Breckenridge, or any one else in the front rank of statesmanship. Our friends tell us that all white legislators are not statesmen. Precisely so, but the white record is made. Theirs is the civilization of the realm; our traditional and universal record was that we were ignorant, indolent, and would steal, and therefore incapable of self-government. The contrary is what we had to prove, and refute this accusation, a fact not yet learned, or, if learned, not acted upon.

“The solution of the great race problem was wholly in our own hands. In the South it had to be solved, the essential conditions being more favorable there than anywhere else. The first prerequisite was peace and mutual confidence, there being a commingling of interests between races. The whites were ready to receive fair proposals rather than dictate terms at that time. In our poverty and ignorance we were not prepared for war, not even friction with our white neighbor, although we were often hoodwinked to believe the contrary. We cannot deny the fact

that the general government itself was not more than prepared for war with the South. These suggestions apply with equal force to-day. A peace basis was our only hope to secure to us a public sentiment which would insure a minority representation of value that would be lasting and permanent. It was our misfortune and not our fault that we were ignorant and poor, yet nevertheless true, and should have been taken into account during that period. Even now this matter will bear the close attention of our race. In a measure we were unable to appreciate the dignity and sovereignty of citizenship, and that the safety of state depended upon its sovereign use. We were swayed by passion and sentiment rather than reason. To us party was sovereign rather than the citizen. We emerged from bodily to intellectual slavery. Our actions, the policies of our leaders, often entangled us in the meshes of trouble from which there was no escape. The white people of the South have their shortcomings, as you and I and all do, but the same sentiment of humanity actuate them that do other people the world over.

“Some deny that democrats have ever shown a willingness to have us coöperate on

any basis politically. True; some opportunities may have been neglected on their part. Efforts and a willingness have been shown, as in the state of Arkansas, by putting the name of Mr. E. A. Fulton, colored, on the democratic ticket for secretary of state, and giving it their hearty support in 1872. The same also in the case of Mr. T. W. Stringer, colored, of Mississippi, for secretary of state with the approval and support of the democrats. The democratic state ticket of South Carolina in 1874 was headed by Judge Green for governor, and Major Martin R. Delaney, colored, for lieutenant-governor. The support given him was not only loyal but intense, as Senator Butler has said. Judge Samuel Lee informed me that he received every democratic vote in his district for Congress against Joseph H. Raney.

“I might multiply instances similar, but it is unnecessary, as enough has been stated to show that the party has not been backward in this respect. But our tenderest corns have always been hurt at the thought of voting with the democrats. We should not continue as a menace dangerous and intolerable to the peace, harmony, and prosperity of the South by refusing to divide our suffrage. A free govern-

ment is based on the intelligence of its voters ; herein lies its safety. On this line the fittest must survive. We have bred statesmen, but of the undergrowth sort, with marvelous rapidity. They have seemed indigenious with the soil, yes, perennial. Indeed, they have grown at the expense of other and more important growths, namely, the value and dignity of agricultural labor have been kept in the background, in which vocation we have had some training and experience and in which we can be the peers of any race. We have been dealing with the mint, anise, and cummin of politics and have neglected the weightier matters that develop the character of a race. In this direction our moneyed men, especially those who have reaped a full financial harvest on the ground and strength of race representation, should be our pioneers. What we had hoped from a national point of view was, that the Republican United States Supreme Court would have guaranteed to us in our weakness the same protection that it did to Mr. Justice Field ; but they sent us to the states, there to work out our own salvation. I have always favored by word and deed a most rigid execution of the laws against all violence, political or otherwise, and do still. In other

places besides the South are continually occurring outbreaks between white laborers of different nationalities, resulting in bloodshed, due to too close crowding on the labor field. We are apt to have more or less crowding in the political arena. Our misfortune has always been in these political crowding contests, that we have been all found on the one side. I have known reckless republican politicians who, for the sake of political gain, would fain jeopardize the lives of our families at any moment to serve their own political turn.

“I repeat again, we must have peace, that our prosperity and progress may have their full development and the real strength of our character shown. The magnanimity shown to colored office-holders by Mr. Cleveland and his administration was without parallel and will remain so, and a marked contrast to the present administration, which removed the few colored men whose republicanism was the last engrafted, even those supposed to be protected by the civil service. The colored voters in Ohio are being appealed to to save the state to Maj. McKinley, but we doubt their willingness to be hoodwinked and to follow as in 1888, especially on the tariff issue. The action of republicans in Ohio and elsewhere in the

adoption into their platforms and speeches the cardinal and time-honored principles of the democrats, namely free sugar and freer trade, or, as it is termed, reciprocity, but universally known as freer trade. And this fact lends peculiar significance to our espousal of the democratic creed, because we believe that it embodies principles more conducive to the happiness of the masses as against the classes. Why should not I, if agreeable to both of us, be allowed to swap jack-knives with my old school fellow, Jim Broadbent of Kent County, Canada? Or to carry the suggestion still farther, why not be allowed to exchange a bale of cotton from the South for tin pans in Liverpool without the government stepping in and claiming a few of the pans? We have found the Canadian and English people we have met a fair dealing folk, I dare say, as much so as any South Americans.

“Many republicans to-day in their exuberance of spirit assert that, having stolen the democrats’ thunder, confidently expect to elect their president by it. A casual glance in states where a high protection is demanded will show that free-trade in foreign labor has been the rule, and protection to American labor, white and black, the exception. A more critical in-

vestigation will carry you still further, even to the importation of foreign domestics. To the cheapest market these protectionists have gone for bone and sinew. A glance to our police court record shows that we ourselves have wrongs to right as well as rights to urge. That a higher degree of morality, honesty, sobriety, attention to manual labor, faithful in its discharge, are needed.

“While we suffer from the effects of trade unions that exclude our young men from entering, notwithstanding this we should do all that our hands find to do, and do it well. Our well-ordered homes, our schools, and our churches have much to do through faithful parents, intelligent and devoted teachers, and ministers in this work of reform. And this reminds me, during the ill-advised agitation in favor of the force bill by a number of our people, a prominent republican remarked to me that the sharpest speech made against the democrats and in favor of the ‘equality of the negro’ was made by a colored man, who never attend our schools and churches because they are colored, and yet urges a colored representation whenever profitable. That is clever, of course, and even sharp, and as Gov. Pinchback

would put it, 'but cowardly,' and I submit in such cases, which are very rare, white representation would be preferable. It is very essential so long as we bear race distinction, race identity, and urge and receive race representation on behalf of race that we should cultivate a larger race pride, especially in our schools and churches.

"From the names given to our public schools the gratifying idea is conveyed that we do encourage a larger race pride. What man, woman, or child of us that did not take a personal pride in the professional standing, the high sense of honor, dignity of character, and great benevolence of the late Dr. Samuel LeCount Cook. All remember with pride the late Miss Briggs as an educator, and Miss Lucy Moten, whose success has been most marked, and as an educator has few equals. Of course there might be here and there a trifling exception. Independence of character and cash are the great solvents of the problem.

"In conclusion let me say, let us in all these questions have strength of character enough to view them in all their bearings dispassionately, that we may determine which is right and which is wrong and false, that we may hold fast only to that which is good and

true. And if by our organization we should succeed in directing thought in independent channels, unbiased by party prejudices, our efforts will not have been in vain."

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATLANTA EXPOSITION AND THE BENEFITS TO ACCRUE THEREFROM TO THE NEGRO RACE AND OUR DUTY IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

THE first and only opportunity offered in this or any other country for the display of our industrial progress or whatever intellectual genius we may possess has been given us through the Atlanta Exposition.

This opportunity coming to us as it does in the best form and under most favorable auspices from the responsible leaders of government and civilization, among whom we live unquestionably showing hope and confidence in our future. We can ill afford to neglect to improve the chances held out to us, showing as it does, that the initial step has certainly been taken and in the right direction. In this invitation we are made to feel and comprehend philosophically that whatever

efforts we may have made toward the establishment of harmonious relations through a peace basis are beginning to bear fruit. For the scheme we bespeak great success which will redound to our lasting credit and much benefit, in spite of the cold shoulder given it on the part of the negro republican leaders, which can be traced to political rather than material reasons. This exposition has its origin in the best sentiment and most popular representatives of those whose interest is advanced even by that of our own and should meet with our heartiest encouragement and best efforts in its advancement.

The colored commissioners of the District of Columbia are made up from the best, most intellectual representative and progressive men and women of our race. The zeal and energy with which they have set about the task assigned them is highly commendable and evidently knows no such word as failure. Encouragement of this commission should not be confined to race lines but should extend to all feeling an interest in our advancement, carrying, as it does, much concern to eight million

citizens. This exposition is, at once, prospective and retrospective, and whatever has been mere speculation in the past respecting us can and will now be made into history. To our white fellow citizens, desiring the advancement of labor and the development of good citizenship, an appeal, we feel, will not be in vain. From this class the commissioners we hope and trust will receive substantial aid.

We appeal to our white friends in this effort of ours, feeling that it is one which gives promise of good results, through the promotion of a more stable and harmonious relationship, being an encouragement to labor, its value and dignity as well, since any improvement to negro labor brings greater compensation and its attendant benefits, resulting to our benefit and lasting gain.

Let us as a race contribute our full share toward the success of this exposition. Let our exhibits be varied, full, and complete. We believe this should be made superior to any former efforts in this direction, being designed to form a basis of race pride, and a better citizenship.

To our mind, this effort should form a grand and successful epoch in the history of our race development, so that our brothers and sisters, throughout the South especially, will gratefully remember this work, which must stand as one of the initial steps toward a higher civilization; then we shall, in race mechanism, be encouraged; then we shall, in meritorious conduct of men and women, be rewarded and habits of industry encouraged; then we shall for ourselves observe a system of civilization inaugurated and good results following, our children educated in a higher and nobler life to their lasting benefit; then we shall obtain a knowledge concerning our progress, and grounds for future hope will be made practically apparent.

Since, as a race, we were given no chance, certainly no encouragement, to participate in the Columbian Exposition, that we might show to the civilized world what progress we had made since our emancipation, it doubly behoves us, since the management at Atlanta has made special efforts in our behalf, to do all in our power not only to show our appre-

ciation but to make as creditable a showing as lies in our power. Hence to our minds this opportunity is far-reaching in its consequences and results.

CHAPTER V.

THE LABOR QUESTION DISCUSSED—
THE BENEFITS WHICH MUST COME
TO THE NEGRO THROUGH THIS
FIELD.

THROUGHOUT America and civilized Europe the chief concern of many of the leading statesmen is the betterment of labor. No statesman of note can be found willing to go on record as championing any cause inimical to labor and its highest development.

We, as a race, have no weapon of defense which we can wield with greater effect and force than labor, labor from the stumpage up. Through the channels of labor the future of our cause advanced, and the solution of the race problem largely solved. Remembering that not only is a race problem to be solved but a great human cause to be subserved. In

the field of labor our position can be made commanding, as its principle and knowledge may be said to enter somewhat into our traditional history, always bringing strength and value, progress and morality following most certainly in its wake. In this field, under proper conditions and leadership, we can be more successful pioneers from start to finish. Through this field the best forces we possess, for our development, are brought into requisition.

Embarking in this field, we believe it is one of the most certain routes giving promise of the achievement of success and insuring a safe foundation upon which to stand.

Our negro republican leaders seem to be unable to comprehend the great changes which have been brought about in the fabric of this government and to foretell future events or to judge of consequences, so largely dependent upon our own actions. We have felt that these leaders have indulged us overmuch in what they are pleased to term our liberties.

The real significance in the moral and

material growth of liberty is its rise and progress toward a higher civilization, and just in the proportion as we understand and comprehend our duties, obligations, and responsibilities. In this direction lies the surest guarantee to substantial liberty; and above all else, we cannot afford to be blind to the real nature and power of our obligations. Resting under liberty's call, one of the strongest armors of defense which we possess is labor.

This field is consistent with our power and resources, giving us our best and most successful route along the line of our progress, the one traveled by the dominant race in their development of a civilization the world over.

Let this, then, be the channel through which we shall travel.

Whatever diversity may follow along this route, of whatever character it may be, so long as it is honest, impressed as we are with its value and dignity, let it be labor, honest labor. We uncover our head to labor and stand in reverence, when we fully comprehend it as a potent factor in civilization. Labor brings

us to the nearest possible approach to equal terms with dominant civilization and its influences everywhere. Especially is this true of the South, bringing, as it does, more freedom and peace, entering into the establishment of a peace basis so much sought.

This is essentially our field; in it we can become the peer of the proudest. This we can say from personal knowledge and experience; in this field we can hoe our own row, and, if we will, own it, with none to dispute our ownership. Through this field our most practical benefits and advantages are worked out, thus making us not only a potent factor in that line, but reaching out in all directions and into all avenues.

Moreover, after the unceremonious hauling down of our colors in the matter of suffrage in the District of Columbia, under the gilt-edge chieftains in their attempt at leadership, the indications were quite clear that in order to extricate ourselves from the wreck of failure all along the line, and in everything, we should take anchorage—seek a basis of operation upon firm and approved ground, in

the field of labor. We have felt, and do still feel, that in this field a safe basis could and can be found for a common standing, reaching, ultimately, to an intelligent understanding of the uses and abuses of manhood and citizenship; but in this, as in other great fields of human effort, looking forward to securing the best average benefit to our race, numbering eight millions in this country. And right here let us say, and with emphasis too, that one of the obstacles to our progress under our new aspects and relation to society is a want of inflexible test of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong. These qualities and virtues are indispensable to our race. They are especially so in our struggling, as we honestly are, for a basic standing bearing the test of the closest scrutiny; thus aiding us in the most patriotic manner to discharge, creditably and acceptably, the high functions of the citizen.

The result of both experience and observation convinces us that we are most at home in the fields of labor.

While residing in Western Canada with my

parents, many years ago, we noticed with great profit the successful founding and development of a negro settlement, and that, too, under the most unfavorable auspices—soil, climate, and production were alike against us; notwithstanding all these we developed a power, force, and aptitude, suitable not only to the ordinary concerns of life but to the higher duties of morality and citizenship. This achievement was wrought out in the heaviest forest from the stump up, from gathering of the harvest to the better understanding and proper use and value of its proceeds.

This pioneering was under white leadership, the Rev. Dr. King, the most patriotic gentleman of Irish nativity I ever met. The surrounding country being made up with struggling Scotch, Irish, and English farmers, fair and patriotic white leadership and exemplars, by reason of their long training and experience in civilization, is best and must stand until we have made leadership possible through similar processes of development of a successful peace basis, and rearing thereon a structure of char-

acter and strength of character sufficient for those and other responsible duties and obligations. Therefore, making ourselves, through an honest and truthful regard for our employer's interest as well as our own, whatever may be the kind or character of work performed, making ourselves, thereby, indispensable, respected, protected, and sought. In this field our strength, as citizens, may be computed in the great equation of valuable and desirable citizenship. In this field a successful and beneficial reapproachment is made easy and manifestly in order at any time, which will cause us to be noted in history and popular tradition. In this field Negro-American labor may yet become one of the peaceful arbitrators in peaceful and successful solution of the labor system in this country, which must and will redound to the lasting credit of the race—a credit that will bring to us interest compounded, which will add not alone to our wealth in a material way, but in every thing that goes to make a race or a nation strong and powerful.

CHAPTER VI.

LOGICAL RESULT OF INVESTIGATION—COMMENTS ON PROMINENT COLORED OFFICIALS OF APPROVED CHARACTER, BOTH DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AND COMMENTS ON RACE LEADERSHIP.

WE have learned that some surprise exists on the part of one or two gentlemen of the adverse attitudes of negro democrats, and other citizens, as well as negroes throughout the country, toward a certain appointment made by the President in the District of Columbia, designed, doubtless, to represent negro democracy in particular and a race of eight millions in general.

In all racial appointments (receiving so few as we do in proportion to our numerical strength), we very naturally and properly scrutinize and investigate their worth, merit, and weight, not merely avoirdupois, or bulk, but

intellectual weight. Our investigations reveal such worthy and efficient appointees that have served the District of Columbia as the following: Hon. John F. Cook, for many years Collector and later Assessor of the District; Hon. B. K. Bruce, Recorder of Deeds; Hon. Fred Douglass, who held the last-named office for several years, and was also United States Marshal for the District; Colonel Perry Carson, the very efficient District Inspector; W. Calvin Chase, Esq., who was also an efficient District Inspector;—all of whom were republicans, and all of them men whose character was above reproach and whose standing was very high, both in the District and country. Their conduct in office was that of careful, honorable, and painstaking officials, meriting high commendation at all times.

Of the two democratic appointments in the District that have stood scrutiny and investigation on the lines above laid down, one is the Hon. J. C. Matthews as Recorder of Deeds, and at present recorder of the capital city of the great State of New York, an office of great honor and responsibility, which carries with it

high judicial functions. We can form a pretty fair estimate of the character of Judge Matthews by considering that he has been elected to this high office by a constituency composed almost wholly of white voters. The circumstances and conditions under which he has reached his present elevated position render it difficult to estimate the value of the service he has rendered and is rendering his race. The significant verdict when he surrendered the office in Washington was that his conduct of it had never been surpassed, if ever equaled, by his long line of predecessors; and we may safely say that the verdict will be the same when he surrenders the office he now holds; and it can be relied on that he will serve out his full term, and well done, approved, will be for him no extravagant verdict. Judge Matthews has reached his present position through his strict adherence to true democratic principles and through his belief that the best interests of his race lay in the division of their suffrage, and through their integrity and high moral principles, which must win.

The other democratic appointment referred to was that of Hon. James M. Trotter, also Recorder of Deeds for the District. He brought with him from his home in Massachusetts an irreproachable character, which he maintained through his term, and no suspicion of immorality clouded his official career, and his official conduct was above reproach.

Respecting the Hon. Mr. Cheatham, a republican recently appointed Recorder of Deeds for the District, his advent into office shows him to have an appreciable conception of his duties and moral obligations to the community, and prove him a competent and trustworthy man—one who will reflect credit on his race; and of him, as well as of all the above-named gentlemen, it can be truthfully said that any lady, be she white or colored, could enter his office without the slightest insult being offered her either directly or by implication.

Again adverting to Judge Matthews as a democrat, it is very suggestive of the consideration shown the race by the democratic party. We have taken no little pains to investigate the amount of recognition shown the race by

both of the great political parties in northern constituencies and fail to find any such recognition shown the race by the republican party as that shown it by the democratic party in the election of Judge Matthews to the position he now holds. Even the late Fred Douglass, during his long residence in Rochester, N. Y., never received such honor and recognition. This affords food for deep thought to thinking men and women, and shows plainly that their best interests lie in a division of suffrage. Such a leader as Judge Matthews can be relied on to resist the assumptions of characterless scoundrels and made-to-order leaders whenever found in the ranks of negro democracy. The same can be said of Geo. T. Downing, of Rhode Island; of Lloyd G. Wheeler, of Chicago, Ill.; of Peter H. Clark and J. Milton Turner, of Missouri; of C. A. Ridout, of the State of Washington; of James Ross, of Iowa; of Archie Grimke, of Massachusetts; and numerous other colored democrats of character and intelligence.

We desire race leadership possessing the highest conception of duty and lofty appreciation of moral character and approved capability

whenever possible, but where such cannot be obtained we prefer fair-minded white leadership representing equality under the law, especially a leadership that does not shrink from the espousal of truly Jeffersonian principles and doctrines. To illustrate our position: At the meeting of the National League at Indianapolis, Ind., we favored the election of General Upshur as president of a Negro Democratic National League if a new organization was to be formed, for the reason that his successful formation and management of our campaign league, operating in the close Northern and Eastern States, made us feel in honor bound to make him a tender of its presidency, even if he would not accept it. For the signal ability displayed by him in the management of that campaign (referring of course to the campaign of 1892), and his knowledge of the men upon whom he relied for the work, well fitted him to say who should lead the new organization if one was to be formed.

General Upshur being (as we all knew) indifferent to the bitter opposition attacks for his services in this direction never swerved to the

right or left and made a division of the negro votes in these close States a positive reality as well as a determined factor.

Let us say right here, we least of all can afford to sanction or encourage the pretensions of self-constituted leaders in whom we may discover a characterless monstrosity. We have doubtless suffered overmuch from improper leaders, and we should have no place for them. Should such leaders be forced on us against our will and protest, to satisfy personal obligations regardless of moral requirements and a keen appreciative sense of their maintenance, we cannot afford to lower the standard of citizenship to which we aspire, and which can only be reached and attained along the line of true character.

INTEGRITY OF SUFFRAGE.

It is not now, nor has it ever been, our purpose to write simply as a critical partisan, but rather with a sincere desire to promote and elevate the standard of negro citizenship in this republic. The true philosophy of suffrage lies in its integrity. "Out for the stuff" or "for what there is in it" are remarks frequently heard by both white and colored voters, and most reprehensible and defenceless remarks they are, which we, especially as a race, can least afford to make or act out, for the reason that we are only making a record especially with reference to our new relation to the body politic. Our actions must deserve approval before our claims to proper recognition will be fully conceded. Moreover, such sentiments or expressions of this character are grievously wrong even in the whites, and does violence to proper citizenship notwithstanding their accepted record for civilization. Ours being still in embryo, so to speak, such remarks would be still more harmful. On the

whole, coming from any race, they should be rebuked as being detrimental and destructive to good citizenship. Ours being an imitative race, when asked why we do thus and so, our answer invariably is, "the whites have done it," "the whites do the same." Precisely so; but we submit as a logical proposition that simply because raw meat is sold in the market is no reason why it should be eaten raw at the table; on the contrary, it would be better when cooked and seasoned. Hence, when we imitate it should be the more mature and sincere of white suffragants. Aside from this, let us establish a character line based upon an elevated and ideal standard.

CHAPTER VII.

CIVIL SERVICE TOUCHED UPON.

WE favor civil service to the extent of its giving security to employes during specific terms, according to grades, always selecting the most meritorious, and enlarging it if necessary.

Some four or five years ago, in speaking with the Hon. Clifton R. Breckinridge and Hon. W. J. Bryan, who were always interested to know how our people felt, whether the law operated favorably or unfavorably to us, we gave as our opinion that the merit system should be retained; that the life tenure was un-American, un-democratic, and pro-aristocratic, and would lead to class distinctions; a proper grading from a nine-hundred-dollar clerkship up; a fixed tenure according to grade would always keep the maximum of the force and vigor to the minimum of old

age; and inefficiency through rotations. We oppose the one-man power in making appointments, rather feeling that divided responsibility should obtain between the political leaders of their respective sections and the chief executive. We believe firmly in party accountability and responsibility being essential to hearty party life and activity and the best good of the country; otherwise a subversion and reversion of party zeal checked.

Patriotism is never confined exclusively to any certain individual or class. Whatever stimulates our commanding general also stimulates the staff officers and line men as well. Oftentimes there is as much patriotic heroism displayed on the part of the private on the field of battle as on the part of the commanding general and staff officers. Where the one-man power is paramount, power and responsibility is too often selfish and personal. Appointments are very often made regardless of public requirements and patriotic party service, and regardless of public approval—too often in the face of both. We deem it unfair to reproach an honest, fair, rugged, and

sincere party man as a spoilsman on account of his seeking to obtain office from his party, whether it be the highest place or reaching down to the lowest place within its gift of bestowal.

CHAPTER VIII.

A WORD OF COUNSEL TO THE NEGRO VOTERS OF MARYLAND AND KENTUCKY—SEEKING STRENGTH FROM THOSE BEST ABLE TO RENDER IT.

“WE are sure winners this time in both states,” was the remark of an enthusiastic republican, in speaking of the approaching elections in Maryland and Kentucky. From his reasoning a solid negro vote is to be cast for the republican ticket regardless of issues or men.

Remarkable as this statement may seem, that we as a race, after thirty and more years of freedom, are still unable to assume the functions of thinking American citizens, and that our right to exercise suffrage has seemingly become perpetual and hereditary, contingent, however, upon voting the republican ticket.

The decision of the United States Supreme Court in remanding us to the several states for the enjoyment and security of our civil rights should not be lost sight of; hence in the preservation of freedom and citizens' rights every possible advantage should be taken to make them most effective, ascertaining who constitute the dominant citizens—in short, “where are we at?” And if they are not to be found on both sides, or even a preponderance on the one side or the other, then our action should be wisely taken; leaving no pretext of a menacing character to be attributed to us, scrupulously evading which, must lead to a proper consideration of men on both sides. In this way we gain for ourselves and families standing and perpetual freedom through our independent action and diversified suffrage. In the past the fetishness of the Irish voter bred much antipathy toward him for a time, from one of the great political parties, which, through a diversity of suffrage, has happily now disappeared. In this respect, seeking to maintain a common basis for safety, let us make the Irish our exemplars, which will

give us strength and security where and when most needed.

In our position and relation to the body politic in the two states, constituting, as we do, a large proportion of the labor element, we cannot easily escape our proper responsibility and welfare; considering men and measures on both sides, and to do it in the most intelligent and philosophic manner within our comprehension. Our home and best interest are here brought prominently to the front. The load we carry, and the responsibilities we assume, cannot be met without assistance. We must cultivate a friendly feeling, and thus grow in favor with the people most able to aid us in the promotion of our common rights and welfare. In doing this, it may become necessary to make individual sacrifices. Any leader unwilling to do this is seeking to sow the seed of discord and mischief for individual gain. We should not ask from such approved men as Senator Gorman and General Hardin, the respective leaders in their respective states, ante-election and catchy letters, which are too often meaningless and deceptive, but from their char-

there may be others who entertain the same erroneous notions, it would not, perhaps, be out of place in this connection, to state what we know to be the true attitude of our people in this regard.

By what process of logical and honest reasoning could we place ourselves in such an obnoxious and absurd position without giving the lie to the contention of our great negro leaders, who have claimed or affected to claim for us the highest powers and capabilities for development? If they are honest their actions should show it; if dishonest, they should publicly disavow any such contention. From our own experience and observation we assert that there is no desire on the part of the negroes in this country to assume any such false attitude; being as we are susceptible of improvement, and improving as we are, why should we wish for anything so absurd and unreasonable?

The statement of Governor O'Ferrell of Virginia, that in the transaction of public business he knew no difference between citi-

zens, should stand. There is no ground, really, for the criticism of the governor's action in the Teohms' incident in the executive mansion on social grounds. At the mansion the governor is king—it is his citadel—he has a right to draw the line there as in his private residence: indeed, it is his private residence, just as the White House is the president's private residence.

We remember that President Grant in entertaining the Santa Dominion Commission did not see fit to include the late Fred'k Douglass, who was a member of the Commission as its Secretary.

We were surprised that any one possessing ordinary intelligence should have allowed themselves to be placed in such a compromising position as Teohms did.

In the matter of public rights—public accommodations is something entirely different, dependent on our civility, requirements, and ability to pay for them. There are public rights and really the common rights of the citizen. While *en route* to Chicago, the Hon. Clifton R. Breckinridge, accompanied by two

ladies with their colored maids, intelligent and neat in appearance, sitting across the aisle in the dining car, was noticed by him as not having been served by the colored waiters; he at once beckoned them to serve them their breakfast; they were hungry as well as were the other travelers. There was no social equality in this; it was simply a matter of common public rights of the traveler.

While a student in Canada, Lord Spencer, the first Lord of Admiralty in Mr. Gladstone's and Lord Roseberry's Cabinet, known then as Lord Althrop, dined at the same table, on a public occasion, with the writer and the other students. Neither did Lord Spencer nor anybody else regard the incident as one of social equality. It was simply dinner time, and the boys and girls were placed at the same table. It did not affect the sensibilities of his Lordship in the least, as he made a happy address to us on the occasion, and has since made inquiries concerning us and our progress since we left the institution. Minister Breckenridge and Lord Spencer are broad-minded men, and

can comprehend the difference between a social and public right. To the mind of the writer this distinction seems so clear that any argument upon the subject is absurd and unnecessary.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER X.

A DISCUSSION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA—SUGGESTIONS AS TO THEIR IMPROVEMENT—A LACK OF DISCRIMINATION OF THE NEGRO NOT YET FULLY DEVELOPED.

THE casual observer, noting our excellent school system in the District of Columbia, would be led to believe that no suggestion relative to its improvement would be in order, touching its management. Through the courtesy of the very efficient supervising principal, Dr. J. H. N. Waring, in whose district we reside, we have been enabled to examine the work done, from the first to the eighth grades, coming under the management of three most competent lady principals, Miss M. P. Shadd, Mrs. M. E. Tucker, and Miss Laura Dyson. Without any criticism, but rather in the line of suggestion or observation, with the

hope of adding additional strength between these grades, and to these principals. While they are thoroughly competent, owing to conditions which they cannot control, it is not within their power to give out all they could under improved conditions which should be had, bearing the responsibilities, as they do, of the seven lower grades below them, make the duties for them too great. Their assistants should be selected from the best in the corps. Great care and circumspection should be had in the adjustment and re-adjustment of the lower grades, selecting teachers in point of fitness and adaptability, for each respective grade; a fifth-grade teacher should not teach a first-grade school, and *vice versa*.

Since the great majority of the children never go beyond the eighth grade, it becomes necessary that they should receive all that it is possible for them to obtain. This can only be done by affording them every facility, even to increasing the pay of these principals, consistent with their responsibilities. With this view of the case we should at once lop off some of the high school top paraphernalia as

being unnecessary and superfluous, and center our energies where the greatest practical good can go to the greatest number, thereby better meeting the necessities of the hour.

Scientific accomplishment and development will take care of themselves as we reach these points in the line of special selections. Instead of spending so much time and money in the superfluous appendages in the high school, let us devote that time and money to the industrial department, thus bringing it in closer touch with those grades which are really our graduating point. We know of the efficiency of some of the high school teachers who could, with profit, be utilized practically there.

It is no logical argument that the whites have this or that in their high school, and therefore we must; the whites have greater needs, greater opportunities, better openings in the future. Ours are less; they must be made and met as we go along, great or small, just in the proportion to our capacity and developing power, only in such propor-

tion will our high school requirements be manifest.

We have often heard our negro leaders and some of our school officials in the past declare that our schools are as good as the whites' schools, that as such they could not be made any better than they are. This statement will not bear the test of truth and logic. Schools are just what the people are from which they draw; in the very nature of things can be no better. The whites have behind them centuries of civilization, culture in their homes, good home training to begin with, while we have but little of these and in a large number of homes none at all; hence for a long time to come our schools, from the very conditions, must be far in the rear.

In proof of what we say, the record of the police court in the District shows to our discredit. While we represent less than one-third of the population we constitute forty-three per centum of the crimes committed, which is a conclusive argument that our schools can not be equally as good as

the white schools; if as good, then the effects produced are entirely different.

To be convinced of the class from which our schools must largely draw for their patronage, let a band of music strike up and in swarms they appear as if by magic; from whence they issue it is difficult to tell, lining the avenue, three and four deep, from the Peace Monument to the President's mansion, presenting a spectacle humiliating and disgusting.

While we are opposed to sumptuary measures yet it seems to us that, through our leaders and ministers, there should be some effort on their part looking to the regulation and manner of these parades, our appearances as well as our conduct afterwards; and right here let us say, that we can boast of as intelligent a ministry as in any State in the Union.

We are inclined to make a too formidable display of toggery—dress on a scale quite incompatible with our incomes. A reformation on these lines is much needed. We spend

too much in dress; we spend too much in parades and picnics; too much in building churches. Let us have fewer churches and more homes, more frugality. It is not what we earn but what we save that lends weight. Being forced to live in alleys is often our own fault, the result of our extravagances.

We seem to lack the power or sense of a proper discrimination, which will grow and develop as we advance in civilization—enabling us to draw the line between morality and immorality—between virtue and vice; that approved character should first enter our basic consideration for preferment. This applies with double force and meaning to our schools and churches and in all our higher relations of life. We have not yet quite learned the sanctity of the home and the obligations and limitation which the marriage relations carry and impose.

For the lack of discrimination, a friend of mine was caused to remark to me: "Do you see that fellow there with that woman across the street? I once took them both off from whipping her husband. She is now this fel-

low's wife. This husband they were whipping was finally driven from home and died in a stable. This couple, doubtless, now consider themselves leading members of one of our advanced churches." A single inquiry as to how this could be, caused him to remark: "Oh, they have some belongings and can occasionally give a good feed."

Until we shall have learned to make discrimination in these things, we have much to learn and much to improve upon, in order that our weapons of defense may be wisely and well chosen.

That we may show the philosophy of negro suffrage and the advantages growing out of the proper use of it, we must convince the American people that we are susceptible of improvement in all those qualities which go to make up character and strength of character.

The recent praiseworthy effort of Prof. Geo. W. Cook of Howard University in reclaiming the lads in his section of the city from vice will be watched with much interest. He should be encouraged and aided.

The successful management of the steam-

boat enterprise by a company composed of negroes, headed by Mr. Webster, Mr. Keys, and others, giving as it does employment to a large number of colored men, demonstrates the real power and force of interested race advancement.

The successful management of the Freedmen's Hospital under the management of that eminent surgeon, Dr. Daniel H. Williams, ably assisted by the executive officer and able physician, Dr. John R. Francis, demonstrates our capabilities under proper conditions and surroundings of which they have been able to surround themselves.

CHAPTER XI.

THE AFRO-AMERICAN FREE SILVER CLUB CHANGED FROM PALMER TO BRYAN CLUB —DR. RILEY DEFENDS HIS POSITION.

THE "John M. Palmer Colored Democratic Club," the oldest colored democratic club in the United States (organized originally in 1875), met September 10, 1896, and changed its name by unanimous vote to "The William J. Bryan Club." The president of the club, Dr. Jerome R. Riley, an old citizen and tax payer of Washington, the author of a work on the race problem, entitled "The Philosophy of Negro Suffrage," which is conceded to be the greatest work of its kind ever published, addressed the club as follows:

GENTLEMEN,—I hold that this change of name to the "William J. Bryan Democratic Club" is at once timely and suggestive, and most appropriate in view of the fact that General Palmer is now opposing the regular nomi-

nees of the National Democratic party in convention assembled.

For the General's personality I have the highest regard.

A few months ago the Chief Executive of this nation issued his edict serving due notice upon Great Britain and the world that the Monroe doctrine should be maintained on this continent, notwithstanding such maintenance might involve many millions of money and great sacrifice in flesh and blood of the common people. That edict was applauded and sustained with patriotic unanimity, regardless of race or condition; and this, too, without even a hint or suggestion of by your permission "John Bull," as being in any way requisite or essential. Indeed, any such hint or suggestion, I daresay, would have been regarded as lunacy. By common consent the chief issue in this campaign is the money question—the free and unlimited coinage of silver, as of gold, at legal ratio. I make no pretense of being specially versed in economic science, or even the principles of civil government; but if we can maintain the Monroe doctrine, although

involving the expenditure of millions of treasure and great sacrifice in flesh and blood, surely the United States is able to regulate its own monetary system in the interest and for the promotion of the well-being of the toiling masses of our own people, through peaceful methods and measures, without the permission of Great Britain or any foreign power. Must the American people be forced to say of consistency, thy name is Humbug? This proposition from my point of view is both logical and fair and of value. Therefore, without begging, borrowing, or stealing, for any purpose of discussion, beyond personal investigation which forces conviction and conclusion, the free and unlimited coinage of silver would result in swelling the volume per capita circulation of money, either directly or indirectly. If this conclusion is founded in truth and good reasoning, it must certainly result in affording a better opportunity for the toiling masses to obtain a living share.

If we can, then we will take the chances of its cheapness, although, as is often asserted, it never vanishes nor hides, which is too often

the case with confidence which vanishes, and gold which hides. This is not a party or a race question, but one involving the life and benefits of the masses against over-fed and domineering money changers.

Before the issues of this campaign had been joined, or the discussion had been properly brought to the attention of the people who were seeking more light on the subject, Mr. John R. Lynch, as reported, hurried off to Canton to inform Major McKinley that the colored voters of this country were all for him, and to a man would vote for him. Later Congressman Murray, of South Carolina, assured the National Republican Committee, as reported in the public press, that the colored voters of his State were all for the gold standard. Gold bugs were they—all of them—whether they practically knew the color of the money or not. Such statements might be amusing, but for their supreme ridiculousness, reflecting alike upon our past progress and future possibilities. When as a farmer's boy, herding sheep many years ago, I depended in corralling them upon the "old bell wether"; if he leaped the bar

I felt perfectly safe in corralling the entire herd. Their action was due to instinct alone. Do these gentlemen, in these assertions, assume the attitude of "bell wether," and thus place the whole race in the attitude of a herd of so many sheep, moving by instinct, void of all reasoning faculties, without independence and courage, which ought to be the heritage of all human beings? I do not believe that the race as a part of the great body politic is satisfied to occupy such a humiliating attitude in this country. Indeed, I can assure you of the contrary, knowing as I do personally of colored democrats, colored republicans, colored populists, even middle of the roadsters—free silver men all of them—thus refuting any such ignorant and reflecting assumption.

In all my reading of current and contemporaneous literature touching the money question, the Indianapolis convention people and Congressman Murray, of South Carolina, in their representative capacity, are the first and only ones to declare unequivocally for the single gold standard. Even the republican platform declares for both gold and silver just

as soon as England and other nations will permit us to have it. Mr. Bryan says in the interest of the toiling masses we should have it now, that silver should never have been struck down at the instance of the money changers of this country and Europe. Moreover, the history of government proves that with all advancement in civilization through political evolution new conditions have arisen, giving rise to new parties, a readjustment of old ones suitable to the new order of things. Indeed, we find that there is no such thing as perpetuity of political parties among white people.

Hence our presence here to-night in support of that veritable and intrepid leader of his party and the people, William J. Bryan—a gentleman, a scholar, a lawyer, an orator and a statesman, whose breadth of statesmanship embraces the area of our common country and all the races.

CHAPTER XII.

HON. JOHN R. McLEAN COMMENDED TO THE COLORED VOTERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AS AGAINST HON. M. A. HANNA—A FEW OF HIS MANY CLAIMS ON THEIR SUPPORT SET FORTH—POINTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PLATFORMS CONTRASTED—REFERENCE MADE TO THE LATE ELECTIONS IN MARYLAND AND KENTUCKY, AND HONS. BLAIR LEE AND CABEL BRECKINRIDGE MENTIONED.

“I AM a true believer in the Jeffersonian doctrine of equality under the law,” was the remark made in our hearing by the Hon. John R. McLean, of Ohio, the gentleman who is the subject of this chapter of commendation to the colored voters of that State, in his office in Cincinnati nearly a quarter of a century ago. We have been at some pains to ascertain how far his subsequent actions have tallied with the above remark in his dealings

and relations with our race. Several colored citizens of that State, of good character and well acquainted with Mr. McLean, have assured the writer that his actions have not only tallied, but have gone, if possible, several bowshots beyond in his assurances of his truly democratic feeling toward us. Such would seem to be his inherited and traditional sentiments.

By common consent he stands to-day before the people of Ohio as the recognized opponent of the Hon. M. A. Hanna as a candidate for United States Senator. It is our duty as thinking men and intelligent citizens to inquire in what direction our interests lie, and our voting strength should be thrown in this contest. It is not sufficient to say simply how we have always voted, but how should we vote at the present time. While changes in our economic relations are taking place and being wrought out every day, we with infantile simplicity have followed our republican leaders without why or wherefore, too timid to investigate and revolutionize if necessary and change tenets and creeds in order to bring us in har-

mony with present economic conditions and requirements.

Wordsworth has written, "The child is father of the man." This is a truism. Why may not we, like St. Paul, put away some of the belongings of our childhood, and infantile voting impressions, if we are ever to reach the plane of independent voters consistent with the duties, interests, and requirements of to-day.

A study of the Ohio democratic platform, which has Mr. McLean's unqualified endorsement and approval, is in marked contrast to the republican platform of the same State, on which Mr. Hanna stands, especially in respect to labor and its requirements. Our position must ultimately be taken with labor and the producing classes. Whatever interests white laborers and producers, equally interests us. We are in no sense interested in capitalistic organizations, as under their system trusts and combines have been formed controlling all that we eat, drink, and wear; regulating the prices of all necessaries of life. We do not belong

there, as experience, through back and belly requirements, has shown.

The most striking plank in the platform, one which is in marked contrast to that of the republican party and in strict accord with the demands of organized labor, relates to our money basis in this country, which, as set forth, should be gold and silver—bimetallism. For this constitutional basis of money Mr. McLean has labored and stands, and as laborers and producers our true interests lie in rallying to his standard. Indeed, we have already heard expressions from a number of the leading colored citizens of the State of their purpose to support the democratic ticket and Mr. McLean as a friend of labor as against Mr. Hanna and the republican platform of “gold and confidence,” “gold and courage,” “gold and prosperity on the way,” “gold and feel it in the air,”—a platform more remarkable for its euphony than for its staying qualities, for the reason that the gold gets out of sight, and the confidence and the courage too often vanish.

Gold and silver, says Mr. McLean, must be the basis of our money standard, as best for the American people and in their interest, and on which our prosperity for all time depends. We fail to see the consistency of the gold democrats in electing Mr. McKinley, a bimetallist and high protection republican, some of them still "pointing with pride" to their work. It is the writer's special pleasure to note at this moment, when so many of the colored voters of Ohio seem to be aspiring to the realm of independent political thought and action, in the pending contest, that the true Jeffersonian principles of Hon. A. H. Garland and Hon. Clifton R. Breckenridge in Arkansas, nearly a quarter of a century ago, commended themselves to colored voters, and met their approval and commanded their support, which we believe to be especially true and marked in Ohio today under the leadership of that very able representative, John R. McLean, of Cincinnati. Aside from that, his great strength lies in his fair dealing with and treatment of labor in connection with his great printing establishment at his home city, or wherever his interests

come in contact with labor and the producing classes. No false promises were made, but a strict observance of every obligation maintained. Therein lies his great strength with labor interests and the common people of Ohio, who are to-day rallying to his support and that of the democratic ticket.

This labor record of Mr. McLean seems to be in marked contrast with the apparent facts reported respecting the record of Mr. Hanna in his dealings with labor and labor organizations. If these reports are true he has failed to concede to labor the fruits of honest toil, but rather withheld and speculated on it. Hence, doubtless, arises the strong opposition of organized labor to him to-day. However, we hear some criticism of Mr. McLean by a certain "gold" democrat in Ohio on account of his reputed wealth. Strange criticism, indeed, to emanate from such a source, their God being gold. Such a criticism, if true, signalizes him as one wealthy man whose ears are not deaf to the wants and necessities of common humanity and labor's requirements, as the platform on which he stands clearly sets forth.

As colored voters of Ohio, this opportunity of supporting the nominees of the democratic party in the State, standing as they do on a platform broad-gauged and embracing the absolute equality of rights, would seem opportune, for the reason that it brings us in touch with the defenders of the interests of the producing classes, which are our interests. Let it be recalled that there was strong conflict of opinion as to the propriety and wisdom of granting our elective franchise on the ground of our dense ignorance, lest it should be used in an entirely partisan manner, under all conditions and circumstances, thus possibly becoming a menace to the public good. In many instances this seems to have been done, as we ourselves have heard the remark from prominent white republicans in forecasting results before platform was really presented or an issue discussed, "so many negro votes, so many republican votes," which we are sorry to say has too often been true, and has, we believe, brought reproach to negro suffrage here and elsewhere.

The advice of our late friend and champion, Charles Sumner, was to divide our suffrage, and thus enhance our standing and strength in the community—advice which we should heed. Moreover, the democratic platform, with Mr. McLean's approval, has also denounced, in no uncertain terms, the failure of the present State government to protect prisoners criminally charged, especially so in the case of the recent lynching at Urbana, where the prisoner was easy of access to railroad and telegraphic communication, no valid excuse can be offered for its occurrence.

IN MARYLAND AND KENTUCKY

our votes have been thrown with remarkable solidity for the republican ticket, making governors, senators, members of Congress, a cabinet officer, and other good fat appointments foreign and domestic. Our account of salvage to date discloses five common laborers and six messengers from those two States. Of course cheap men are usually taken at their own price. Our position in those two States is that we are

largely dependent on our white fellow citizens for the advantages of obtaining a livelihood, for our school and church interests, and all the advantages along the line of our improvement.

The majority of white voters in those two States being largely democratic, it would be well to inquire whether or not we advance our material and community standing by thus throwing a solid and massive vote for the republican ticket. Of course, if we advance our material relation and standing with the white democrats on whom we are dependent for family support, and church and school and varied interests, let us continue our solidity; but we believe the contrary to be true, that in such solidity we invite severe criticism and even hostility, and prevent neighborly communication on points of common interests.

We have the acquaintance of two leading democrats in their respective States,—Hon. Blair Lee, of Maryland, and Hon. Cabel Breckinridge, of Kentucky,—and unhesitatingly affirm, from our political and personal acquaintance with these gentlemen, that no republican in any State in the Union would go farther in

conceding, demanding, and defending our rights as citizens under the law. We have referred to these two States at an earlier period, but through the action of the American Publishing Company, of Hartford, Conn., the publication of this work has been delayed to the present moment, which makes it possible and pertinent to refer to after-election results.

CHAPTER XIII.

REFERENCE TO A PERSONAL AND PRIVATE LETTER OF THAT GREAT DEMOCRATIC LEADER AND CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE'S CAUSE, HON. WILLIAM J. BRYAN, OF NEBRASKA, TO THE WRITER REFERRED TO—INTELLIGENCE OF COLORED BIMETALLISTS COMPLIMENTED BY HIM.

THIS typical leader, with an ideal record, indeed, a statesman without a blemish, to-day stands before the people as the uncompromising advocate of that constitutional basis of money, gold and silver, the surest and most reliable money basis for this country, regardless of what outsiders or other countries may think, has been denounced by demagogues and critics, as other great leaders and reformers in the interest of the people have been, as Sumner, Phillips, Garrison, and Lincoln were. Hon. William J. Bryan, of Nebraska, in a private letter to the writer received only a few weeks ago, complimented and commended

the support given the cause by the intelligent and thoughtful colored advocates of bimetallism, their study of the question, and their ability in reaching proper conclusions thereon, thus showing his feelings toward all supporters of the cause regardless of race.

Our freedom having been wrought out through great conflict and agitation, we can least afford to discourage or discountenance a reform when carried on to promote the best interests of the common people. We are a believer in conflict whether in politics or religion as being essential to the solution of great problems and the production of the best results. No thoughtful student of the history of enlightened Germany can deny that the agitation of the people through social democracy has wrought out and brought great improvement to the masses. Under such a leader as Mr. Bryan, standing on a platform of equality before the law, what good reason can we assign for not following him? From personal acquaintance with and observation of that gentleman, we unhesitatingly affirm that no man lives who has a keener or more sin-

cere respect for the rights of all races, and greater interest in their elevation. When enlightened democracy chooses such a leader we can well afford to follow it, and not have it said, as we have remarked before, in footing up party strength and results in advance, "so many colored votes, so many republican votes."

CONCLUSION.

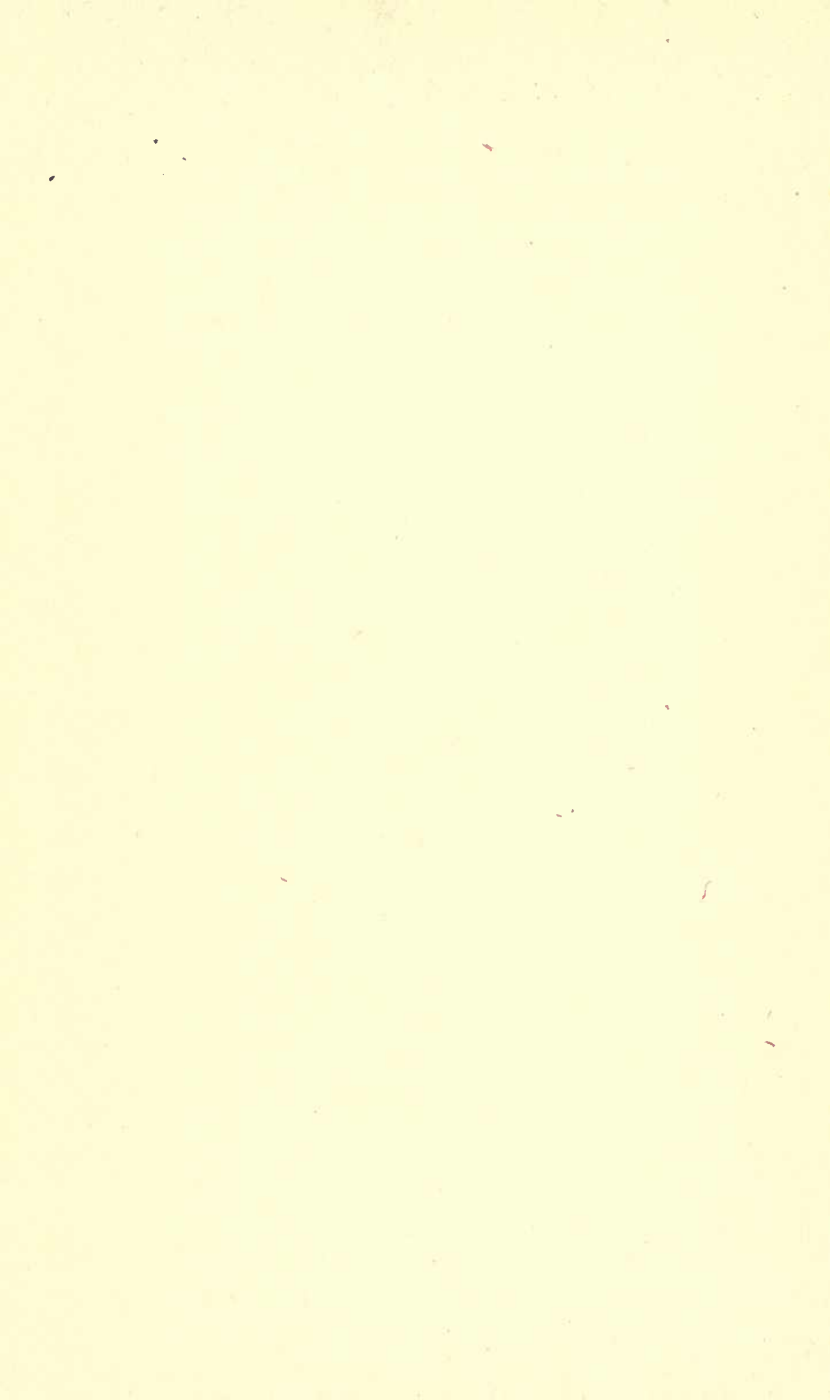
In closing this discussion for the present, the writer desires it to be distinctly understood that in following the line on which he embarked nearly a quarter of a century ago, he has sought to deal philosophically with this problem on its merits; agreeable to the justice of its proportions as we view it; in the hope of ultimately, through a peace basis, of reconciling any feeling of enmity or hostility which might have engendered since our changed relations, as being inimical to popular interest.

The disadvantages under which we have labored throughout this period precludes the

possibility of vanity or any sordid personal ambition on our part.

Our only purpose, therefore, has been to deal, as best we may, with freedom and the obligations which it imposes.

NOTE.—Respecting the delay in this publication, caused by the American Publishing Company, of Hartford, Conn. Their whole proceeding will be laid before the public at the proper time, in the proper place, and in the proper manner.



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