

"What Shall We Do With Him"

Time is the great school master, ~~of the ages.~~ To every people and to every nation he assigns its special portion of the great problem of human destiny. ~~Whatever may be the truth as regards material science there can be no doubt that history is simply a record of human evolution.~~ The story of humanity is one of alternating growth and decay, of natural selection, modifying influences, and the survival of the fittest. ~~Whatever may have antedated~~ man the law of his existence is eternal progress. He must grow better or worse. He must either push constantly forward or be forever slipping backward. Adam be he one or many was but an infant. The seeds ~~of~~ only ~~to~~-day were sown in Eden. Out of the germ of the dim past has grown the ~~man~~ man of the present.

Man may perhaps have deteriorated so far as mere sensitiveness to moral impressions is concerned. There may have been a time when the human soul was the mere white sheet upon which the lightest thought of evil cast a shade. Judging by the laws which have since governed human development, however, prehistoric man must have been, in all other respects, so dwarfed and weak as to awaken wonder that it should have developed into the world of to-day. For ages, the sole problem of human life was no doubt the simple struggle for individual existence. Every human creature fought single-handed and alone for life. The storm, the sunshine, flood and ~~drought~~ drouth, hunger and thirst, the beasts of the fields and the monsters of the deep, were all his enemies.

The history which the cave-dwellers carved with their teeth upon the bones of extinct species, the story which the charred remains of the lacune period tell, is one of ages of struggle by which man was forced inch by inch along the road from unrelated, individual animality to consociated and mutual-ity interdependent humanity. "Am I my brother's keeper?" typified no doubt the first awakening of the human mind to the duties and responsibilities attending man in his segregated relations and the story of the fear and flight of the first murderer ~~will~~ ^{may well} be considered as ^a ~~the~~ tradition of the primal judicial act of ^{incubate} ~~incubate~~ human society. Cain became a wanderer—that is, he was exiled, excluded from that human society whose first law he had violated. Mankind had banded together for mutual defence. Because their foes were many, they had formed a ring that they might always face the danger with the young and weak on the ~~inside~~. Man's sole ^{duty as a} ~~any less~~ social factor was to hold his appointed place in this defensive circle. On condition that he did so he was shielded from attack in the rear and his own ^{group} ~~circle~~ of dependents shared in the common safety. Cain was the typical violator of this elementary common-law. Instead of aiding in the common defence he had become a common enemy. His punishment was the natural and reasonable act of self-protection; he was expelled, banished, driven forth from associated humanity. It was the first of the countless precedents by which the responsibility of every man for the welfare of every other man, of every

people for the welfare of every other people, is growing towards its ultimate determination. This is the real field of History. Civilization, Politics and Religion are only distinct books of the grand epic neither of which can be fully understood except when read by the light of all the others; but of each and all the one keynote is man's relations to his fellows and his individual or segregate responsibility for others' welfare. The story of humanity is only an endless sequence of Man's attempts to solve the infinite problem which the Almighty set before the ages, in that first terrible question "Where is thy Brother?"

The phases of this problem have been as infinite as the conditions attending the ~~efforts~~ for its solution. The first steps were no doubt simple and the growth hardly perceptible. Centuries may have been required to shape and fix a single characteristic. Prehistoric man like the being of later growth was no doubt laminated in structural development. I do not use the term pre-historic ^{as referring only} to refer to a time of which we have no record or tradition but as applicable to the whole period of human existence before history became a complete and philosophic detail, not only of great events but of the motives and aspirations which underlay these visible phenomena. What we are wont to call history was, until very recently, nothing more than a record of the apparent facts of a few great events and the salient features of a few notable lives. Whatever deductions we may make therefrom with regard

to the character of the men and the mainsprings of the movements which are thus ~~related~~^{recollected} rest mainly upon the imagination, which fills out the scanty details of established facts with those more important yet unnoted elements of individual and national life from which the great movements of history sprang. We know as facts that this king reigned, that conqueror lived, this people rose from obscurity to dominion, this other fell from power and sank into oblivion. Why these things were, what were the underlying causes that produced these events and developed these characters, we are left to infer from the universal nature of humanity and the few known conditions which then surrounded the various aspects of human life. The fact that Carthage was the rival of Rome, that she was overcome in war, that her battlements were overthrown and the city destroyed is all that history tells us of a nationality that must have been exceptionally weak as well as remarkably strong. These facts are not, however, sufficient to be accounted history. They are not sufficient to account for the fact that not one vestige of Carthaginian life is left upon the earth; that no single word in any language is traceable to her vocabulary that no hint or shadow or color of her thought is to be found in the moral or intellectual life of to-day. We only know that for three hundred years she was the rival and the all but successful competitor of Rome. No doubt she did something to mould humanity to its present

shape but so far as any traceable influence is concerned Carthage is as truly pre-historic as the pile-supported villages which once lined the shores of the Swiss lakes.

The fact that the barbarians of the North overran the seat of Roman empire, ravished the plains of Italy, overthrew and destroyed ^{so} far as their savage greed and lust of ruin were able, ^{visible} every vestige of her power, is by no means sufficient to account for the fact that all at once, within less than a hundred years, as if stricken by some terrible annihilating pestilence, the force, the life, the power, the genius of Rome departed from the earth leaving for ages no trace of their existence save the vast dumb monuments that told how great a people had once established seats of empire on the Italian peninsula. The truths of history, the real underlying influences which cause events to come to pass are the very things which history, as we have been wont to use that term, fails to record. Out of the dust of the past, from the scattered remains of a few dead languages, out of records so imperfect that the ordinary facts of life can only be guessed at, we build up the life of yesterday and only trace the causes which led to the growth of one people and the decay of another.

Through all this dimly-traced precession of events we ~~learn~~ note an infinite succession of cause and effect by which every age and empire contributes its particular atom of growth and power to that noun of multitude—humanity. Athens passed into oblivion and Rome rose out of obscurity. The Victory that stood in the Acropolis transferred her seat to the Capitoline hill, no longer a lithe-limbed Victory but an armed Minerva, symbolical of wisdom, patience, fortitude and a courage that counted obstacles as an incentive rather than a discouragement. The soft, voluptuous, disputatious art-enamored outgrowth of Athenian life melted away before the rugged strength and iron will of Rome as mists before the sunshine. The Athenian may have been the more beautiful in harmonious curve and flexile character, but no one can doubt that the Roman was the grander man. Political, artistic and literary disquisition flourished in the Academia. The moral element, the grandeur of a purpose that absorbed all thought of self, a breadth of view, a recognition of moral obligations of which the Greek had no conception, became the keynote of Roman life. Whatever defects of character he may have had, the Roman told the truth. The Greek practiced lying as a fine art while the ancient, like the modern Orientals had no need to cultivate dissimulation. Honor had its birth in Rome and the confidence which has linked humanity together in later ages was in the main forged of Roman brass. The impulse of rivalry

which was the highest stimulus the Greek could know gave way in the Roman to a grand and sturdy morality which enshrined country and home, the Roman ideal, far above self, victory, glory and all individual considerations. With the disappearance of this moral purpose, this great stimulating idea Rome also as an element of human progress sank below the horizon of History. In her stead came the strong-limbed, bold-hearted barbarians of the North bringing with them, in crude and undeveloped form, an idea which mingling with the residuum of Grecian, Roman and Jewish life has been the mainspring of human progress ever since.

It matters not what view we may take of this endless sequence of events, whether its resultants be good or bad, whether we believe mankind to have grown better or worse, we cannot doubt the fact of progress. The elements of what we are to-day may be distinctly traced in what our fathers were yesterday. The blood that thrills our veins is not more certainly made up of the life-blood of a hundred peoples than is the thought that fills our souls the product of all the world's thought that has gone before. "I am time" was the declaration of a great metaphysician. No truer aphorism was ever uttered. In every man's life is combined elements of all the world's ^{preceding} life, ~~that went before~~. The child that is born to-day is the concentration of all the lives that have preceded him. Races, nations, perhaps even creeds, are but instrumentalities by which are wrought out the problems which yesterday puts

upon the trestle board for to-day to solve. Time is an endless, progression in which each day is equal to the sum of all the yesterdays.

It is only in view of this great truth that we are permitted to speak of the lessons of history. The past touches not what must be done in the future, because no past is the equivalent of any future. No man or nation of the past ever stood in the same relation to others which any man or nation occupies to-day. The past is only valuable as a teacher. It only offers lessons to to-day in that, by careful study of what has been, we are enabled to perceive what are the principles and ideas underlying all progress and judge therefrom what is the duty and the destiny that lies before our feet. By this we learn that the first essential of healthful existence among peoples and nations, creeds and civilizations, is that of constant growth. Just so soon as a people reaches the limit of aspiration, just so soon as power has touched its zenith, just so soon as the animating impulse that underlies the national life has reached its climax, and there is nothing more for them to strive for, that very instant decay takes hold of the national life and begins to undermine the structure which ages may have builded up. So true is this that it has passed into a proverb that politically and historically the world moves in cycles; that growth is but the precedent state of decay; that nations and peoples have their appointed orbits through which they move as

planets in their courses. We have accepted the ratchet as the emblem of human progress pushing forward the wheel of life with intermittent stroke yet for each modicum of gain permitting something of loss. In this view there is something of truth and much more of error. Every people, every nationality every cult and sect is the result of some initial force, some underlying idea, some original impulse that either loses its power or carries its subjects on to the completion or fulfilment of a specific purpose. Every such impulse either grows weak with lapse of time or assimilates from time to time with some kindred idea which widens and extends its field of action and perpetuates its power. Some of these forces seem capable of almost illimitable expansion; others exhaust themselves in the accomplishment of a single end. Sometimes, as in the case of Carthage, the impulse is so ephemeral that it leaves no trace save in the life of that stronger people who take note of it only to destroy. The initial force which projects a nation into existence, throws a people to the front, or constitutes a race an element of the world's life, may be either dissipated by obstacles, exhausted by the accomplishment of its purpose, or accelerated by the development and assimilation of other ideas into a constant enduring force. Capacity for this latter seems to be an especial element of our more modern civilization.

The mere fact that a nation continues in existence is no evidence whatever of vitality. China, as a distinct

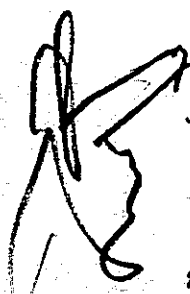
portion of the earth's surface, the Chinese as an organized people, may be said to have an existence dating back of any reliable historical narrative, yet since the last invasion of the Tartar, Chinese life has been upon the wane. The contrast between the vigorous race that poured forth from the elevated plains of central Asia and overran the already decaying empire, and the feeble multitudes who now hold its territory merely by sufferance of other nations and peoples is very great. The impulse which forced the Tartar over the great wall and compelled him to become a conqueror, has exhausted itself and the dominating race has sunk down to the level of that which it overcame. It is a dead nationality without coherence, growth or vital power, existing simply by the vis inertia which it offers to the advance of civilization. It represents mere numbers, grains of sand, atoms of humanity, without any common thought or purpose. It is in no sense a people, only a vast segregation of individuals whose highest aim is the continuance of individual life and the promotion of individual advantage almost irrespective of others rights save as they are secured by force or fear.

Of our Anglo-Saxon civilization we have been accustomed to say that its animating impulse is civil and religious liberty. In one sense this is true and yet it is only half the truth. The liberty which has grown up in England differs from that which has been evolved upon the Continent not so much in the greater freedom from restraint which

is enjoyed by the individual as in the character of that restraint and the method in which it is imposed.

To the Anglo Saxon people seems to have been assigned the task of applying the idea of mutual obligation and responsibility for the welfare of others which had been slowly and hardly worked out by other peoples to the relations between governments and individuals. The English theory of government may be said to consist of two ideas: The First that government exists for the sake of the governed. The Second that the governed as well as the governing classes have a right to be represented and heard upon the question of what constitutes the common good. The Continental idea of government is power. Whatever its form it is only some modification of autocratic rule. Under this view, the citizen is restrained by the power of the state whether his own volition is part or parcel of that power or not. Because it is the will of the state, the decree of the government—therefore the citizen or the subject must obey. No portion of that English common law which restrains even the sovereign power if it contravenes the right of the subject is ^{accepted} ~~in operation~~ there. The supreme will finds no judicial power standing behind the throne to limit or construe its authority.

The fiction by which the English monarch was deposed and only an abstract sovereignty recognized in his place was too subtle and smacked too much of the spirit of the freeman to command the approval of the jurists whose ideas were modelled on the Roman law. Betwixt the king and Parliament of England and the citizen stands that judicial power which enables even the humblest subject to bid defiance to the power of the realm. Bowing submissively to the maxim that the king can do no wrong, the English law goes farther still in its sublime idealism of the sovereign character. It declares not only that the king can do no wrong but that the welfare of the people being the sole object of sovereign power, the king will not think of doing any wrong. So that whatever of injustice there may be in the apparent or attempted exercise of sovereign power, is not the act of the sovereign and cannot be recognized. Instead of drawing from this maxim the conclusion that prevails upon the Continent, that whatever the sovereign does is therefore good and just, British law declares that whatever is not good and just, is because of that not the act of the sovereign no matter with what formality it may be attested. This single fiction of British law is the kernel from which English and American liberty has sprung. It is the first authoritative and practical recognition of the mutuality of obligation subsisting between the sovereign and the people—the first battlement behind which the subject might safely stand in defense of his right and against which the king dare venture no assault. This is the British con-



tribution to the extension of the great underlying principle of humanity, the responsibility of every man according to his strength and power for the welfare of every other man. British law has made the ruler of the realm simply the keeper of the subjects' right.

This Anglo-Saxon idea of government received a new impetus in the formation of the government of the United States. With us the animating impulse may be said to have been not so much the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" of which we have so long boasted, for in those things we were scarcely a whit in advance of the mother country. The principles which we declared fundamental in our government had already been recognized as indisputable truths and underlying principles of the British Constitution. Every element of our bill of individual rights, whether found in the state or national constitutions, had already been held to be the law of Great Britain. What our fathers boastfully asserted to be the inalienable rights of an American citizen had in the main been already declared the rights of the British subject. Neither were the differences in the forms of government so very great. It was in regard to the sources of power, the ultimate recognized possessors of authority, that the American idea differed toto caelo from that inherited from our British ancestors. The "King and Parliament of Great Britain" was exchanged for "We the people of the United States." The people of Great Britain were as

free, their individual rights were as carefully secured and as fully guaranteed as those of the citizens of the United States. The great distinction lay in the fact that the American people had devised a new depository of power. For the first time the people acting under proscribed forms, deciding according to the will of the majority, became the government, the ultimate, last analysis of authority, in the new republic. This idea underlay the Declaration of Independence. The American colonies may be said to have evolved the idea of the majority which constituted the distinctive feature of the new government. The principle that sovereignty dwelt with the masses and was to be exercised neither by those ordained nor by those chosen but simply by agents representing the will of the majority, was the new American idea,—the corner-stone of our government. The establishment of this principle would seem to have been the sole purpose of this new departure in government.

To declare that the people should determine for themselves all questions affecting their own rights should direct and control the policy of the nation would seem to be all that was requisite for the establishment of what was afterwards defined as "a government of the people, by the people and for the people." In truth the only question that remained to be decided was to determine who were "the people—a very simple query it would seem but one which it has taken a century to answer—and there be people who perish in believing

that it is not yet entirely settled.

It is a curious fact that the stream of history is forever running up hill. It is always the best people against whom the worst elements of a nation rise in remonstrance or revolt. It is always the dominant class who are right and the weak who are wrong. The lamb is forever muddying the water which the wolf desires to quaff.

~~We have proclaimed, legislated and decreed and yet there seems to be some doubt about the actual fact. We shall find this to be the case in all history. Things are very rarely what sovereigns and parliaments declare them to be. The very fact that the ~~becomes necessary~~ proves conclusively that it is not an indubitable truth.~~

The oppressor always yearns for peace but those whom he oppresses are forever conspiring to disturb his serenity. So far as we know Ramses II, the Pharaoh of the Scripture story would have had a very comfortable time in his kingdom if it had not been for the Israelites. They were the bane of his existence. They brought famine and pestilence and plagues of every conceivable sort into the realm. If the season was hot and dry no doubt Ramses laid the blame upon the Israelites. If the waters came down from the Mountains of the Moon too lavishly and submerged more than the accustomed area of his kingdom he attributed the resultant evils and discomforts to the fettered molders of untempered bricks. In short the crowd that Moses and Aaron finally led away, in

the estimation of the Egyptians were unquestionably the cause of all the ills that had befallen their taskmasters for many a generation.

The slaves whom Rome had taught to fight for her amusement and shed their blood for the delight of her populace, when they finally tired of repeating day by day the accustomed salutation, "Morturi te salutant, Caesar" ~~be-~~ thought themselves that they had swords and muscles, burst away from their keepers and fled to the defiles of the mountains, were regarded by their masters with indignation and disgust. Their revolt was considered an "act of presumptuous and inexcusable insolence."

The peasants who rose in Swabia only to fall by the hundred thousand at the hands of their mailed oppressors were regarded as unreasonable malcontents to whose brutal clamor alone was due all the suffering and unhappiness of the best people of that day.

The Jacquerie of the French Revolution whom ages of oppression had ground down until the thin spring of humanity within their natures at length recoiled and smote the civilization of their day with blood and terror, have been handed down, even by our modern historians, as brutal barbaric fiends who devastated the fair fields of France and destroyed a peaceful and cultured civilization.

Even in our own day England looks upon the people of Ireland as chronic and inexcusable malcontents because, for

sooth, poverty and ignorance and weakness rise up in savage remonstrance against ancient and venerable abuses. Even Anglo-Saxon civilization and English Christianity are unable to take note of the fact that the lamb who disturbs the waters of the United Kingdom to-day is but the outgrowth of some centuries of injustice and oppression.

The evil which men do lives after them quite as surely in a collective capacity as in individual instances. The nation that perpetuates a wrong or winks at injustice and oppression to-day is sure to find a lamb standing in the stream of its prosperity and muddying the water of its desire to-morrow. The fact that Ireland is disquieted to-day is of itself conclusive evidence that Ireland was mis-governed yesterday. A land that not many generations ago supported in comparative comfort three millions of people has barely sustenance for one to-day. God has sent the sun and rain, the earth has been willing to yield the riches of her bosom, year by year. The Irish people have grown freer, have become more intelligent and ought likewise to have increased in comfort, prosperity and contentment. The only reason why they have not is that the fruits of mis-government have been ripening, year by year, that impoverishment has grown more and more intense and at the same time more and more galling. The demands which now seem to be and perhaps are, unreasonable, would never have been made because occasion for them would never have arisen, if simple justice had been rendered

in the past. The wrong which was but a grain of mustard seed yesterday, to-day has grown into a tree that overshadows the whole land.

Twenty odd years ago the Czar of Russia emancipated the serfs and to-day his descendant hides from the sight of man lest the hand of the Nihilist should cut short his life. Ah, how ungrateful are the lambs of history! The serf who was nothing yesterday would fain be a man to-day. Given an inch of liberty, he demands an ell of power. No sooner is the creature who has been for untold ages the sport of another's will recognized as a man, than with a strange, pestiferous infatuation, he begins to clamor at once for all the rights and privileges of other men. The lives which had been hitherto but an incident of the soil, the souls that had passed from hand to hand by mere conveyance of an estate in fee, no sooner finds itself relieved of this degradation, allowed to claim wife and children and home, as theirs by theory of law, than they begin at once to demand that the theory be reduced to practice and that the rights which the good Czar bestowed be supplemented by these farther privileges which are inseparable incidents of freedom and manhood.

Civilization lifts its hand against all these attempts of the weak to become strong, of the poor to become rich, of the ignorant to grow wise, and of the lowly to rise to the plane of the highest, with almost as much of angry contempt as the Roman felt when he shook his fist at the seditious gladiators or Pharaoh when he harnessed his char-

ots and pursued after the fleeing Israelites. The Irish agitators and the Nihilist of Russia are regarded as the bane of European civilization—the unreasonable absurd, envious and blood-thirsty lambs that persist in casting the filth of their poverty and the terror of their hope into the stream which the sleek, smiling, cultured, self-complacent wealth of modern society sniffs and scorns.

Our Christianity has done very little to change the heart of classes and peoples. The well-fed Pharisee is yet better esteemed than the half-starved sinner. The man who steals a million dollars is accounted fit to be a Senator. The wretch who pilfers a chicken is deemed worthy only of the penitentiary. The class who by the exercise of ancient privilege stands across the path of another which clamors for better things has always the sympathy of the world's better element. When injustice brings despair, it is only the outrages of desperation that are condemned. The injustice which underlies it is forgotten or condoned. The cry of the highest, richest, best, is, "What shall we do with the humblest, meanest, worst?" Charity stretches forth her hands and gives alms. The crumbs from the rich man's table are freely offered to the poor, who, queerly enough, are never quite satisfied with this bounteous grace. The law lifts up its sword and declares that the rights of poor and rich alike shall be protected. The only difficulty is to determine what are the rights of the poor and weak and what the inheritance

of the rich and strong. Strange absurdities crop out in the story of human progress. "Am I my brother's keeper?" asked red-handed Cain. He seemed to think it an irrefutable rejoinder. Yet they who stand now in places of power, on whom the good things of earth have been bestowed, hearing this question echoing down the ages have learned to answer frankly admitting their responsibility, "We are," they say, "the keepers of the poor and weak—our brothers. What shall we do with them?" They are not only ready and willing to admit their responsibility but are anxious above all things to discharge it—in their own way! Little by little there has crept into human thought the consciousness that somewhere or other there is error in this conclusion. That the lambs might as well claim the right to care for the wolf as the wolf to take care of the lamb. Of course it is a very absurd notion. The lamb is no fit guardian for the wolf and cannot become so. Yet somehow or other the lambs keep getting the idea that the difference between a wolf's hair and a lamb's fleece, does not indicate an inherent difference of right. Our forefathers when they established our American government gave voice to this conviction which had been growing more and more potent as the ages went by to join the silent past by uttering the startling truth which had slept almost unheeded since the early Christian days, that "all men are born free and have certain inalienable rights among which are life and liberty"—precious gifts in themselves but

are as nothing compared with that other nobler, grander utterance which embraces all the incidents of human opportunity—the inalienable right to the pursuit to happiness; the right which constitutes the entrance-fee to the race of life—the right to be as good, as great, as rich, as high as any other man may grow; the right to gather about his life all those essentials of safety, privilege and enjoyment, of home and hearthstone, of soil and sunshine, of opportunity and aggrandizement—which do not conflict with the rightful enjoyment of like privilege by others. It was a glorious conception. Time has not yet sounded all its praises enough. The world has not yet realized its full significance. It is the germ within which is enfolded the happiness of future ages. It is a talisman which will open the way out of danger yet undreamed of. It contains the clue by which the riddle of humanity must yet be solved.

Yet in the very moment of its utterance it stood forth a lie. The people that declared themselves free, that cut away the fetters of limitation and set their faces ruggedly toward sundown with the impulse of liberty springing each nerve and hardening every muscle for the conquest of a continent—this people DARED NOT PLACE UPON THE LEVEL OF OPPORTUNITY WITH THEMSELVES A MAN WITH A BLACK SKIN! The African was good enough to fight for liberty. In the camp with Washington at Valley Forge the black man did uncomplainingly a soldier's duty for the triumph of that climacteric

claration of immutable right, but when the terror of English arms had vanished from the land, when the nation that was planted in blood and tears came to count up its achievements and to fix and ordain those fundamental laws by which these principles were to be conserved, in that very moment the sheep were parted from the goats and the INALIENABLE rights were allowed to be modified and distinguished by the fact of race and color. A few years thereafter the great expounder of our constitution—the man whose wisdom is accounted almost equal with the sword of Washington in the firm establishment of the young Republic—sat in the highest court of the realm and solemnly declared it to be the purpose and intention of the founders of our government to declare that INALIENABLE RIGHT WAS ALWAYS WHITE AND SERVITUDE AND OPPRESSION THE INEVITABLE INHERITANCE AND DESTINY OF THE NEGRO RACE.

The great jurist in this opinion seemed half regretfully compelled to abandon the domain of logic and give utterances in his judicial robes to the voice of public sentiment rather than the plain deductions of the common law. For sixty years the world said in his praise, that by thus yielding to public clamor, flexing the basis-principle of English and debasing the primal glory of our great declaration, he had saved the Republic. Somehow we have not heard so much said in glorification of this sagacious denial of right, since the war of rebellion. There seems indeed, to

have grown up an unexpressed but very general belief that a millions lives in 1860 was a pretty high price to pay for the satisfaction of a part of our people in 1795. The interest on injustice grows at an enormous rate. The debt which might at first have been discharged with a penny comes at length to swallow up a fortune.

There is something very touching, as we look back over intervening history, in the kind yet apprehensive solicitude, with which the slave-holding Chief-Justice exhorted the slave to accept this decision as final and to be content therewith. He seemed instinctively to know that ~~his decision~~^{it} could not stand. Perhaps the prescience of genius taught him that the destiny of a race could not so easily be determined. Perhaps he saw the nation grow to an empire, a race that numbered but a few thousand then grown to be twice as many as the people of the whole country numbered then. At any rate he earnestly exhorted the slave to be contented with his lot, the African to wear his bonds with cheerfulness. He reminded them that the decrees of Heaven were not only inscrutable but also immutable. He assures him that if he has not been clothed with the inalienable rights of the white man he has still very much to be grateful for. If he has not liberty and the right to pursue happiness, he still has life and may get a good deal of happiness without pursuing it. He entreats him to remember that he has a soul which infinite grace may save although the devil is for some mysterious reason allowed

to have his own way with the body. The Chief Justice seemed to think that this fact, taken in connection with the sunny temperament and pleasure-loving nature of the African, ought to be quite sufficient to make him even as a slave, one of the most contented and enviable races of mankind. SO EASY IS IT TO FIND CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE IN OTHERS' LIVES.

To this the people said amen and the fact that human right is always white was again settled for all the ages. The slave was relegated to his harsh destiny, the Divine order established and vindicated and the question as to what we should do with the colored race in America was for the first time settled by the highest known tribunal, by the court of last resort, by almost universal public sentiment.

It is odd to find a nation which had so recently appealed to the highest principle of abstract human right as the foundation and excuse for its own demand for wider liberty, quietly, resolutely and as a matter of course, ignoring this claim when put forth by individuals of another race. The grounds of appeal were identical. So far as the application of the principle was concerned the situation was the same. The sole difference lay in the fact that the one man who claimed inalienable right was clothed in a white skin and the other most unfortunately for himself bore in his cuticle the inerradicable impress of centuries of African sunshine. Yet this people deliberately declared that the principle for which they had fought had been too broadly stated in their

boastful declaration. That which they meant was only that WHITE men were entitled to inalienable and that BLACK men were divinely ordained inheritors of inalienable oppression. Thus for a second time, the nation replied to the query, What shall we do with the Negro? by remanding him again to a destiny of immutable inferiority.

For seventy years the fiat stood unaltered. Now and again by the tongues of ^{many} advocates the colored man of America made his appeal to the Caesar who rules the land, asking not merely for himself, but in the name of all humanity, that we should cast aside the burden of a palpable fallacy and stand forth the free, untrammelled champions of universal and immutable truth. It was in vain. We relegated his petition each time to the domain of immutable, unassailable precedent. "Because you have been slaves," we declared, "slaves you must and shall remain. We cannot hear your cry, we cannot consider your petition. WE HAVE SETTLED THE DESTINY OF THE AFRICAN IN AMERICA." In the halls of Congress, in the public assembly, in the press—wherever mind speaks to mind, though his champions had come to be numbered by millions, we refused to listen to their utterances, saying always, "IT IS SETTLED; IT IS FIXED. THE DECREE IS IMMUTABLE AND SHALL NOT BE DISTURBED."

When the assassin's bludgeon, perhaps more than his own eloquent appeals for liberty had listed Sumner from the House of Representatives to the Senate the great commoner of

Missouri met him as he entered that chamber still weak from the assassin's blows, and said to him, "There is nothing more to be done, sir; all the great questions that can come before this body for decision have been settled for at least a century." So the question was settled. We admitted the fact of responsibility for the destiny of the Africo-American and we had determined for all time what that destiny should be.

Yet strangely enough the question would not rest. "What shall we do with the slave" echoed and pulsed along the generations, reverberating through the land, year by year, until heart and brain and conscience were on fire. Liberty was making appeal to her most boastful votaries and saying to every one that enjoyed the blessings of inalienable rights, "The rights claimed for yourself thou can'st not safely enjoy unless thou accord them as freely unto others." There was no possibility of avoiding the conclusion. "WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM", echoed forever in our unwilling ears and Justice grew ever more and more imperious in her demands.

The absurdity of our position kept growing more and more apparent—more and more obnoxious to our sense of equity and righteousness—until by and by the public sentiment of the land rose in remonstrance and the tide of odium swept against the rock of the constitution on which slavery was builded until it tottered to its fall. A little later steel-crested waves flowed over the land and Slavery was forever

swept out of existence. Then a free people rejoiced. Not content even with the work that had been accomplished, they remade the tables of our law and etched in upon the pure white marble of the constitution the emphatic declaration that FREEDOM KNOWS NO RACE OR COLOR, that equal and inalienable right is the immutable the same to all. It was a glorious work, and the nation properly exulted in the work achieved. It had waited long but what was the delay in comparison with the boon which it finally bestowed. Then indeed we knew that the question was FINALLY DECIDED.— The slave could no more stretch forth his fettered hands and demand redress of grievances because we had stripped the fetters from his hands and remedied the ills of which he had so long complained. The slave could trouble us no more because he was no more a slave. The haunting cry that startled the soul of the primal murderer would no more disturb our slumbers. We had admitted our responsibility for our brother and had discharged it. We had made him free as we were free. The Africo-American citizen stood upon the same level of right and liberty with the Caucasian. Whatever he WOULD be, he MIGHT become. The door of opportunity was opened to him as well as to us. So it was determined again that the African was FOREVER ELIMINATED AS AN ELEMENT OF OUR NATIONAL POLITICAL THOUGHT, AND NOT ONLY MUST NOT BUT COULD NOT COME BEFORE THE FORUM OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE SEEKING OR EXPECTING ANY FURTHER ENLARGEMENT OF RIGHT OR POWER.

Strangely enough the negro would not down. When in his hymn of gratitude for liberty bestowed, he would persist in stretching forth to us the hands which the shackles of slavery had crippled and benumbed and asking with strange, unreasonable persistency, "How shall I fight the battle of life, how shall I do the devoir of the citizen, how shall I uphold the liberty that has been granted, with these shrivelled limbs?" We would not hear nor heed the prayer. A few looked good, kind, souls, and saw the absurdity and gave of means and time and toil to cure the evil, but the nation turned away its eyes, closed its ears and said: "What have we to do with your infirmity? We gave to you liberty and opportunity. If you are unable to take, hold, enjoy and improve such liberty and opportunity, it is not our fault. You must not come to us for aid. Go your way. We have done with you. The question of the African in America is settled and settled for all time. We have given you all that we ourselves enjoy—the same rights, the same privileges, the same opportunities. Be ye therewith content."

It did seem cruel that this black-fleeced lamb should be forever disturbing the water that our sleek and cultured white wolf so panted to drink and enjoy. After forcing us from the pinnacle of our original determination, after thrusting himself into the midst of our peace and prosperity as a disturbing element, after deluging the land with blood in order that he might have liberty, still insatiate he came asking for more; not clamorous, not vindictive, not

with threat of violence or demand of right, but with the same mute pathetic appeal to reason, to righteousness, to our own sense of justice and the primal declaration upon which our national life is based--nay even with appeal to our future safety and the same we hope to win from the future.

The little cloud that was once no bigger than a man's hand, the quarter of a million who demanded right at our hands when we made our appeal to the world for our own liberty, has now grown into a people twice as many as we then were--seven millions of men, women and children, the outgrowth of slavery and the heritors of liberty, weak and poor in fact, yet powerful in theory, stretch forth their hands into which we have placed the ballot and declare to us: "We know not how to use this instrument for our own good or the safety of the nation because slavery had blinded our eyes before freedom came to enlighten our hearts. We are maimed Samsons who lean against the pillars of the temple of liberty feeling the strength of newly awakened manhood thrilling our nerves while the world mocks at what it deems our weakness."

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM? As he stands before us seven millions strong, potent for good or evil to the world as well as to himself, the question is one which well may be asked with all seriousness by every one who desires not merely the nation's outward peace, not merely the comfort and composure, that stagnation of the public thought which marks the lack of any question of absorbing interest, but that far more

important, lasting and worthy peace, the peace that comes from the doing of good works and rendering justice unto all men.

Undoubtedly the whole nation is heartily tired of this question. We of the North do not wish to have anything more to do with the negro than is absolutely necessary. To us he is practically an alien people. The few thousands who are scattered among our many millions are not enough ^{to give} any realizing sense of their existence as a race. We know the negro as we do the elephant--by specimens that we have seen here and there. We always desired that he should receive justice and when we found that no one else was inclined to render to him his right and occasion offered when we could do it as well as not, we did it. By so doing we discharged our consciences. We washed our hands of him. He became an object of our solicitude, not because he was a negro but because he was a slave and as such encumbered the fair surface of our free land. We ignored the fact of race because, to our minds, it had no significance beyond merely ^{marking} ~~making~~ the boundary line between freedom and bondage. This line once legally eradicated we feel that there is nothing more that we are called upon to do, in the premises and we are naturally inclined to interfere as little as possible with what seems to be a burning question at the South, though to us it seems utterly absurd and needless. We feel that we have done our

duty, our whole duty—in making the negro a freeman. Now let him do his duty by improving his opportunity and making himself—whatever he is able to become. This is unquestionably the sentiment of by far the larger portion of the people of the North. In this conclusion too, the people of the South entirely agree with us. They have settled the question of the negro's future just as conclusively and satisfactorily to themselves as they determined it thirty years ago by the passage of the Fugitive Slave bill. Abstractly they have no desire to work the negro any personal ill. They are simply convinced that he is entirely incapable of being or becoming a co-equal element with them in the government of State or nation, and only desire that he shall be let alone to work out under their supervision and control whatever may be his destiny in a subordinate relation. With their conviction as to his true position in the social system this view is entirely logical. The only question is as to the correctness of this view. It is unquestionably opposed to the theory which the people of the North have so far endorsed as to determine that it shall at least have a fair trial. They regarded it as settled by the result of the war that the negro should have a fair show as an independent governing factor. That was all they desired and they are willing there to let the matter rest. The South declare that this has been done and that now humanity and civilization are not called upon to give any further heed to the ~~status~~ status of the negro at the South.

Practically, the whole nation always excepting the colored man and the few who think they see peril in the present state of affairs, are not only as willing but as anxious to ignore the future of the negro as we were thirty years ago to ignore the existence of the slave. We are anxious to turn away forever from what we have been wont to stigmatize as "SECTIONAL ISSUES", to those on which we fondly hope to find the views and interests of all sections to be identical.

This yearning for a political millennium is no doubt natural enough and is certainly altogether creditable to our human nature. Unfortunately nations and peoples are not permitted to select for themselves the questions to which they must give attention. It is when all things are satisfactorily settled that discord and convulsion are sure to rise. Nations are no more able to order their lives as they would have them than individuals. The conflict of parties and principles cannot be regulated to suit our wishes or inclinations. Political leaders cannot prescribe what questions shall or shall not be considered at any particular time. Now and then one undertakes the task only to find himself precipitated into oblivion as the result of his presumption. The issues on which parties separate, the ideas which shape the fate of nations, are not those which political theorists choose to prescribe. All the wise men of the land united to denounce the folly of national interference with the slave power. Even at the last moment there were not

wanting thousands upon thousands of sturdy Mrs. Partington's who stood upon the shore of the sea of thought and, mop in hand, strove to beat back the billows of freedom. Yet the question came despite all opposition and now there is hardly one in all the world who does not thoroughly approve the course of Divine Providence in ordering events in His own way. Unfortunately for us we are never any more willing to ask what God requires to be done in a collective, than in ~~our~~ ^{an} individual capacity. We insist instead upon stubbornly clinging to the belief, that as the voice of the people is the voice of God, he is under some sort of moral constraint to adopt our individual notions as the index of His will. Fortunately for ourselves, Providence has never taken this view of human affairs. The one who, with God, makes a majority, is not apt to be the one who makes the most noise in the world's ~~curriculum~~ ^{auriculars}. Fortunately for the progress of humanity, the notions of the higher classes—the sentiments of the best society—rarely prevail in national or public affairs. It is only after they have been scourged and chastened by peril or adversity that these classes are willing to see the leading of Providence and are ready to walk in the pathway pointed out by fate.

The molar movements of society never begin at the surface. It is from the lower strata that the upward impulse always comes. It is the cry of the poor, the weak, the helpless and the oppressed to whom the God of battles listens.

So it happens that while parties and politicians declare one thing to be of prime importance, a stubborn and irrepressible fate ordains that precedence be given to another. While we shout of tariffs, civil service reform and other burning questions which the highest and the wisest unite to declare must be decided before anything else can be allowed to engage the public attention, even at this very time, silent and grim arises in our midst the shadow of a great inscrutable, impenetrable mystery. Seven millions of men, alien to us by the fact of race, akin to us by the fact of birth, stand forth on our Southern border a distinct, peculiar, unalterable fact. It matters not what were our sentiments with regard to slavery we have now to confront a question infinitely more extensive, more difficult of solution, and more terrible in possible consequences. Those who dare speak of it to-day are not in danger of their lives as were those who attacked the institution of slavery forty years ago. The very worst they are likely to meet is a mild ridicule. They will be told that they ride a hobby, that they see goblins where only the owls in the moonlight make quaint shadows; they are accused sometimes of a malignant desire to stir up strife amid peaceful communities.

The question of wisdom or folly must decide itself. Why the man who urges a peaceful solution of a terrible problem should be accounted malignant, it would, perhaps, puzzle the most subtle metaphysician to determine. The facts in the

case are not ~~any~~ ^{many}. They admit of no denial and no one has yet appeared who could offer any good reason why existing causes should not produce their logical results.

1 — IN EIGHT OF THE STATES OF THE UNION INCLUDING ALL THOSE TOUCHING THE COAST LINE BETWEEN THE POTOMAC AND THE MISSISSIPPI THERE ARE AS MANY COLORED MEN AS WHITE. IN THREE OF THEM THERE ARE CONSIDERABLY MORE.

2 DURING THE NINETY YEARS PRECEDING 1880 THE WHITE MEN OF THESE STATES HAD INCREASED IN NUMBERS THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY)THREE PER CENT. DURING THE SAME PERIOD THE COLORED MEN OF THE SAME REGION HAD INCREASED FIVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE PER CENT. OR TO STATE IT IN OTHER WORDS THEIR COMPARATIVE GROWTH HAD BEEN AS SEVEN WHITE TO ELEVEN BLACK.

3 EVERY CONCEIVABLE ELEMENT THAT CAN AFFECT THE FUTURE GROWTH OF THE RACES IN THIS REGION INDICATES AN INCREASE RATHER THAN A DECREASE OF THIS DISPROPORTION.

4 ALMOST THE ENTIRE ACREAGE OF LAND, BY FAR THE GREATER PROPORTION OF PROPERTY AND INTELLIGENCE OF THIS REGION ARE NOW THE POSSESSION OF THE WHITES. IN ROUND NUMBERS TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT OF THE WHITE RACE AND EIGHTY PER CENT OF THE COLORED RACE OF THIS REGION ARE ILLITERATE. THEORETICAL-
LY, THE INDIVIDUALS OF THE TWO RACES HAVE BEFORE THE LAW EQUAL RIGHT, PRIVILEGE AND OPPORTUNITY. PRACTICALLY, THE COLORED MAN IS WITHOUT ANY POLITICAL RIGHT OR POWER AND HIS CIVIL RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC PRIVILEGES ARE ^{SUCH} AS THE WHITE MINORITY OF

OF THE VARIOUS STATES SEE FIT TO ALLOW HIM TO EXERCISE.

5 BETWEEN THESE TWO GREAT SUBDIVISIONS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES AND A HALF THERE HAS SUBSISTED THE MOST INTENSE, BITTER, RADICAL AND INERADICABLE DEVERGENCE OF SENTIMENT, HOSTILITY OF IDEA, AND ANTAGONISM OF INTEREST.

It is useless to deny or discuss any of these propositions. Only one of them has ever been denied and that one is in regard to the sentiment which the two races mutually entertain for each other. This is purely a question of testimony as to a matter in regard to which witnesses differ. The white race of the South is practically a unit in maintaining the assertion that they are the natural, legitimate, loving guardians and protectors of the colored man. It is not a claim of recent origin. Ever since the colored man was brought to this continent and held to service and labor, he a natural right and privilege to secure his comfort and happiness by exercising with regard to him a paternal oversight and control has been urged with angry vehemence. Then the Southern white man declared himself to be the natural, rightful patriarchal guardian of the happiness and welfare of the slave BECAUSE he sustained the relation of ownership towards him. NOW THE SAME MEN put forth precisely the same claim and allege that he may be trusted to secure in all respects the prosperity and happiness of the colored race BECAUSE the

negro is NOT his slave. He persists that he alone understands the negro's capacity for freedom because he alone fully realizes the extent of his submission as a slave—that two centuries of absolute control of the negro as a bondman fitted him especially and peculiarly for his direction and guardianship as a free man. In the ante-bellum days we were assured that the relation of master and slave was one of the most tender mutual regard and esteem and that whatever of hardship attended the relation was only such as was rendered necessary by the moral needs of the slave and the preservation of a beneficent institution. For a time after the close of the war, it was quite the fashion for these same people to deplore the hard fortune of the freedman in being deprived of their tender and affectionate care. During the first few years of freedom stories were very rife of colored men who deplored the blessings and delights of servitude and panted for a restoration of its joys. Of late the story has been changed and for some reason or other, the press of the South gives its chief attention to assuring the freedman that he is in no danger of re-enslavement because he has neither power nor inclination to do him wrong. They told us in the olden time that the master's self-interest would prevent him from doing injury to his chattel-real. They tell us to-day that the man who has been a master is especially fitted, and, as it were, Divinely appointed to lead the freedman along the stony path of liberty by short stages and easy gradations up

to the pinnacle of such development as it may be possible for him to attain, because of some special and mysterious devotion which he has for the rights and liberties of the man to whom he has once sustained the sacred and paternal relation of proprietor.

This is one side of the testimony upon the ONE POINT which is controverted with regard to the present condition of affairs affecting the problem which we are called upon to face of the African in the United States. In the States to which we have referred, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, four millions of white men, we will say, testify without exception if you choose, to these facts. They say: "WE CONTROL THE COLORED MAN as we have a right, and as it is our duty to do. We desire that he should have all the privileges to which he is entitled--all which we think him competent to exercise. We feel toward him the utmost kindness and the tenderest goodwill. We know just what he needs, we understand of what he is capable BECAUSE he was our servant and our bondman for two hundred and fifty years." It will be noted that they have never once declared that they were willing that the negro should exercise his own volition as a political factor, or that they at all desired him to become capable of such exercise.

Now what says the other side? For strange as it may seem, there is another side to this question, and another

class of witnesses to be called. Against the four millions of white men monopolizing the wealth, intelligence and entire landed interests of the States we have named, stand four millions of colored men, poor, ignorant, weak, despised. They testify upon this subject just as the white men of that region have already testified, by their words and by their acts, and this testimony is quite as positive, significant and unanimous as that which we have already examined. Without any considerable exception the colored ^{man} ~~men~~, whether controlled by some strange fatuity or influenced by that marvellous sagacity which underlies the instinct of nations and peoples, declare by word and by act, that he does not believe the Southern white man to be Divinely authorized or especially fitted for the control of the negro's destiny. On the contrary, he manifests not only a willingness but the most remarkable and persistent eagerness to assume the direction and control of his own future for himself.

It is a matter of little moment which of these conflicting ideas is the true one. So far as the question of to-day's duty is concerned we might even admit that the Southern white man was the natural guardian and director of the interests and destiny of the colored man of the South. The really important question is, whether THE COLORED MAN HIMSELF WILL EVER BE BROUGHT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACT UPON THIS DOCTRINE. It would be a most charming and delightful solution of a very troublesome and unpleasant matter so far as the people of the North are concerned, if this were actually

the case. It would be a happy circumstance if the colored man would turn as a race with one accord to those with whom he has dwelt so long, confess his weakness and inability to secure and preserve his own rights as a freeman and trust-fully deposit in escrow as it were, with them the rights and privileges which he has received from the nation to be rendered back to him when he should reach such point of development as these duly constituted guardians and protectors of his development might deem necessary for their due and proper exercise. There would be an end of controversy and the question so often declared to have been settled would trouble us no more forever. Unfortunately our black-fleeced lamb persists in standing in the water and demanding for himself, without the intervention of any agent or proxy, not only the legal rights which we profess to have accorded him but the privilege of exercising and enjoying those rights side by side with equal freedom and opportunity with his colored fellow citizens. Individually considered, no claim could be more absurd or ridiculous. Every colored man that draws the breath of life between the Potomac and Rio Grande knows full well that during the years of probation here on earth there is no likelihood that the day will dawn when he can successfully assert his rights or peacefully improve his legally bestowed and solemnly guaranteed privilege and opportunity on a par with the white man. He knows this; he always has known it; but for twenty years he has maintained, **ACTIVELY AND**

POSITIVELY WHEN HE DARED, silently and negatively when he could not otherwise, the declaration that he not only desired but intended ultimately to exercise the right and privilege of self-direction and control--if not for himself then in his children or his children's children.

It is this very difference of opinion between the two races in the localities under consideration which makes the question of the African in the United States to-day an infinitely greater, more difficult problem than it has ever before been. Seven millions of men thoroughly agreed upon the fact that they have certain inalienable rights; and backed up in that belief by the declaration of our national Constitution, is a force that no civilization dare despise. Linked as this question is with the national affairs and affecting as it must the comparative political power of the whites of the different sections, it is daily and hourly gaining ground, and is not one that can long be neglected