

The negro does not ask supremacy. He does not ask equality until he merits it; he does ask knowledge, and if we are a superior race, we should be ashamed to grant him less. As an honest debt, we owe him a Christian education. When we put the ballot into one hand, we should have put the school book into the other. We need not fear for his ignorance, if we but place within his reach, opportunities for his advancement. We must give him the rights to which he is entitled; where he is enlightened we must respect him. Our government recognizes no inherent right to rule on account of superiority of race,—granting that such a distinction does exist. We cannot subject him without defiance to the most humane laws. Our alternative must be deterrent violence or neutralizing fraud. But when he has set his foot on the lower rung of the ladder of opportunity, how long will he suffer either of these? Since no Africans have been brought here for eighty-eight years, he is more distinctly American than are the whites themselves, when considered as a whole. A very small percentage of them are pure blacks. Some of the best white families of the South are represented in the race; we see the effects of it in his aspirations; we cannot ignore it. It will be dangerous in the extreme to attempt to oppress such spirits when once they become enlightened.

How shall we prevent the causes which once so nearly wrought our ruin, from operating in a different form to engender the same dreadful consequence again? for just as surely, a crisis is awaiting this nation, unless the political attitude toward this people is changed. History teaches that nations have often forgotten the sharpest lessons of experience. Inequalities of political rank may fall before the spirit of democracy, but in cultivated intellect there is an indestructible aristocracy which will survive in spite of all the elaborate provisions of human constitutions, and in defiance of the delirious rage of human passions. These may be burning thoughts to our prejudices; but they will doubtless burn until the

embers kindled by inherited pride and selfishness, shall have been quenched in an atmosphere of Christian love and patriotism.

“Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.”

None of us are greater than events, and we cannot, if we would, annihilate or subvert the law of sequence. It was not destined that the principles which cemented the colonies together and led their barefoot soldiers against the battlements of tyranny; the principles which have actuated men to carry our frontiers through cruel massacres, and over the scattered relics of a once treacherous foe; the same principles which cost this nation one million of its sons to unite the dismembered union which the institution of slavery had brought about, and to blot out that awful curse from her career; it was not destined I say that principles so dearly won should be ignored by the sons of the very men whose blood had been shed to defend them. The price paid for the emancipation of the negro was too great that he should be elevated above the slave, to suffer persecution so grievous and intolerable to a free man; the price was too great, that we through gross negligence should fail to perpetuate those principles upon which alone our form of government stands secure.

“Men die but caste lives forever” says a prominent American journalist. The past seems to corroborate this concise statement, and more: Empires have died; but those institutions which gave liberty to all their citizens are still living in our best free governments to-day; while those which did not give this liberty, died with them, or else remain clinging to skeletons of former great nations, from which we, of this enlightened age may well learn practical lessons.

That great unity of society, the independent, Christian home, will some day maintain his social equality, education assures him his political rights, and in his acquisition of both of these