

ART. IV.—AN APOLOGY FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO.

WE are afflicted in our day with a brood of ready and flip-pant, but inaccurate, writers and talkers, black and white, who are possessed of but one idea, which is made to do service at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances in which the Negro is the subject. Like old Cato, whose speech in the forum, in the senate, in the public mart, in the social gathering, invariably closed with the thundering refrain, "*Carthago delenda est*," so these wiseacres declare upon every occasion that the Negro must have only industrial education. To charge them with ignorance makes them fit subjects for the pity of clear-thoughted men; but to charge them with bias and want of intellectual integrity, or with immaturity and insufficiency of thought, reduces them to jugglers, incapacitates them as safe guides for the development of a race or an institution, and throws their testimony out of court.

We have come to a time when the method and content of the education of the American Negro has been revived with renewed interest. Instead of bemoaning the revival, or belittling the discussion, there is reason for rejoicing. An unwise settlement is no settlement, and a thing unsettled will surely return to be settled. The air is filled with the cry for industrial education for the Negro. The argument for this kind of education is so ingeniously stated, representing that type of education as the *ne plus ultra* for the Negro's future, that many friends have lost faith in the large outcome of the present method of education as it applies to the Negro; while other lifelong benefactors, through whose agency and philanthropy the Southern colleges were planted and developed, have wondered whether they made a mistake or not. In fact, certain streams of benefaction for the education of the Negro have dried up, while certain others have lost their strong current. On the other hand, the craze for industrial education became so powerful, and the funds for the support of the colored college became so small, that many presidents of these colleges were swept from their lifelong convictions of the

need of a liberal education for the race, and were forced to adopt the industrial feature, in order to receive financial support from certain agencies, and to be well approved by Southern whites. The writer regards it as a serious blunder that nearly every one of the Negro colleges in the South has bowed the knee to this wooden image, whose toes of iron and clay are so clumsily welded together. A college is a college; it is not an industrial college, or a college for industries, though it is an industrious place. An abnormal development of society has crowded out the old apprenticeship idea, and in many respects society is the gainer. We are therefore driven to the establishment of scientific trade schools and industrial training schools. But the college is a different product; its genesis, purpose, and work assign to it a unique place in the educational system of the country. There was once a time when New England was called the land of notions, but the South in its modern industrial college idea has carried off the palm.

The pathway of Negro education is strewn with the dead bones of many theories. All of these theories were the progeny of prejudice and ignorance. This book of the recent past reads like the myths of the Norse or Greek. The visionary theories were gravely set forth with much ruse in science, philosophy, history, and the Bible to prove the utter impossibility of forcing an idea into the uncorrugated brain of the Negro. All the disciplines of learning, together with conjecture and the Bible, were exhausted to show that the Negro was a lower order of humanity, designed and foreordained by his Maker as a servant of servants, a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. The tint of his skin, the kink of his hair, the shape of his nose, and the size of his foot all furnished conclusive arguments of his inferiority and settled his doom among men and races. One of the chief defenses of the system of slavery in this country was based upon his utter mental incapacity. Slavery, therefore, was a humane system. Never in the history of the world has there been such a chain of so-called logical argument welded together for the justification of a system. Legislative hall and court room, rostrum and stump, schoolhouse and farm, pulpit and pew all were used to enact, decide, declaim, teach, and even to defend the mental inferi-

ority and incapacity of the pagan Negro between the plowhandles on the farm. But, *mirabile dictu*, the sons of those pagan plowhandle Negroes have come upon the stage in less than one generation and have laughed to scorn the logic of the past. "Truth is stranger than fiction." But the children of the dragon's teeth are now opposed to the higher education of the Negro. They have been driven from their so-called impregnable fortress, have left their heavy guns and ammunition, and have retired to the last ditch. The problem to be settled to-day is not whether this man can learn to read, but, What should he learn? This question carries with it the unspoken one, What should he not learn? It has ceased to be a question whether the Negro can learn mathematics, Latin, Greek, science, philosophy, history, and literature. That is settled forever. But the bald question is, Ought he be taught these for his own good? Out of a spirit of great solicitude for the elevation of the man, some claim that Latin and Greek will spoil him. Or, as a distinguished ecclesiastical editor in the South puts it, "*hic, haec, hoc*" will be the ruin of the African. He will get out of his place. The ingeniousness of the questioner is second only to the ingenuousness of the questions. A cold examination of the questions will discover an ancient animus. That to the contrary, however, let us find the truth, for it is the truth that shall set men free.

Let us ask the question so often asked, Does the Negro need the college education? Americans believe in the practical. In inventive wit, in practical statecraft and all that relates to and belongs to a practical civilization America has yet to be surpassed by other nations. In fact, we have thrown religion into the scales, and have asked the question, Does it pay? This intense, practical age is in danger of becoming a superficial age. By its emphasis upon ready-made thought that has an immediate value, because of the large profit it promises, it destroys the root of original investigation in the principles that give permanency and character to civilization. The unthinking and senseless definition of a "college" is that it is a place where nothing practical is taught. This definition is usually given by the man whose boast is that he never rubbed

his head against a college wall or, in other words, by a man whose ignorance is dense and who is thankful for it.

The place of the American college in the American life is secure, and it can never be thought of without the unconscionable conviction arising that, without the American college, America would not be what she is to-day in the commercial, civil, industrial, religious, and educational world. President Thwing, in his *Forum* article of June, 1893, laboriously went through Appleton's *Cyclopedia of Biography* to ascertain the proportion of college men who have won distinction in American history, up to the date of the publication of that work. The full number of men and women mentioned in the books is 15,142, distributed as follows and showing the per cent of the college graduates in the books :

	Clergy.	Soldier.	Lawyer.	Statesman.	Business.	NAVY.	Author.	Physician.	Artist.	Educator.	Scientist.	Journalist.	Public Man.	Inventor.	Actor.	Explorer, Pioneer.	Philanthropist.	Number of persons in Cyclopedia.
Total.....	2,744	1,755	1,678	1,310	1,105	575	1,124	918	630	1,016	522	313	765	166	107	249	180	15,142
Percentage college graduates.....	.58	.08	.60	.33	.17	.029	.37	.46	.104	.61	.63	.36	.189	.11	.037	.037	.16	.35

The significance of these figures appears in the fact, according to President Thwing, that only one man out of every ten thousand of those who do not attend college rises to distinction, while, of the college men, one out of every forty-five rises to the great distinction of being mentioned in a cyclopedia. "Old President Quincy, of Harvard, said that a man got a good deal out of a college if he just rubbed his shoulders against the college buildings. But he certainly does not get much in this way, in comparison with what he gets by rubbing his head against the cases in the library. For, to the true men of alert intellect, pure heart, and strong will the college represents a new birth and a new life." In a subsequent article, in the March issue of the *Forum*, President Thwing continues his college article series under the caption, "The Best Thing College Does for a Man." From a wide territory, including many of the best educated men and women in all callings of life, we take the pith of their excellent letters :

"It aroused my mind;" "It was the making of me;" "It brought me invaluable development of character;" "I derived mental and moral discipline;" "It gave me practice in thinking and acting independently;" "It gave me ability to work with intensity, whether of body or mind;" "It enriched my life, it deepened and broadened my view of truth; it ennobled my aim; it strengthened my choice of right; it clarified my vision of, and love of, the beautiful. The college pours oil into the lamp of character, and makes its light more radiant and more lasting. These qualities are the best thing which a college can do for its students."

Without any invidious distinction, it was said of the college men of Europe by a common-sense philosopher, in answer to a senseless sneer that the college men were failures, "Yes, one third of the college men amount to nothing and fail; one third become drunkards and go down to lives of shame; but the other third rule Europe."

The bread-and-butter argument has played no insignificant part in destroying the college character of many Southern colleges. It claims that the college cannot train active, practical business men. No one would charge Chauncey M. Depew with being an unpractical man or a theorist. In an address at the tenth convention of the University of Chicago, in April, 1895, he said:

I acknowledge the position and usefulness of the business college, the manual training school, the technological institute, the scientific school, and the schools of mines, medicine, law, and theology. They are of infinite importance to the youth who has not the money, the time, or the opportunity to secure a liberal education. But the theorists, or rather the practical men who are the architects of their own fortunes, and who are proclaiming on every occasion that a liberal education is a waste of time for a business man, and that the boy who starts early and is trained only for one pursuit is destined for a larger success, are doing infinite harm to the ambitious youth of this country. The college, in the four years of discipline, training, teaching, and development makes the boy the man. His Latin and his Greek, his rhetoric and his logic, his science and his philosophy, his mathematics and his history, have little or nothing to do with law or medicine or theology, and still less to do with manufacturing or mining or storekeeping or stocks or grain or provisions. But they have given to the youth, when he has graduated, the command of that superb intelligence with which God has endowed him, by which, for the purpose of a living or a fortune, he grasps his profession or his business and speedily overtakes the boy who, abandoning college opportunities, gave his narrow life to the narrowing pursuits of

the one thing by which he expected to earn a living. A college-bred man has an equal opportunity for bread and butter, but, beyond that, he becomes a citizen of commanding influence and a leader in every community where he settles.

Thus it will be seen that the American college is at the basis of that splendid development, an intelligent, cultivated, patriotic, God-fearing citizenship, that is the glory of America and the buttress of her institutions. Drop out the college from American life, and you have the play of "Hamlet" with Hamlet left out. Let us now answer the question propounded and give reasons for our faith.

First, The Negro needs the higher education on the basis of humanity. Whatever is good for man is good for man. This is a truism that no half-wit would risk itself in denying. There are two questions in this connection that have been clearly and definitely settled for all time, namely, the humanity of all men and the equal right of all men to the opportunities and blessings of life. The humanity of all men contains its corollary, the brotherhood of all men. It is now a waste of time to attempt to prove this doctrine. Science was obliged to accept it to save itself from irreconcilable contradictions. It has passed into a fundamental belief, alongside of the idea of the existence of God. Upon that basis, therefore, the Negro should have the opportunity for higher education. He has the same instincts, yearnings, ambitions, and aspirations that other men have. We ask, Should not these divine spiritual cravings be satisfied? They should not be satisfied because he is a black man—"black" has no more claim to respect than "white"—but because he is a man. The Negro says with Terence, "*Homo sum ; humani nihil a me alienum puto.*" The Pharisaic solicitude, again, concerns itself as to the outcome of higher education by asking the question, Will you not spoil the Negro by giving him Latin and Greek and mathematics? Concerning this spoiling business we have this to say: If a young Negro is carrying the hod and making a fair livelihood, or if he is plowing corn and has a burning spirit within for something higher, a desire to study mathematics or science or Latin or Greek, he ought to have that desire gratified, and be spoiled as a hod

carrier and made into a cultured gentleman, a man of large ideas and broad vision, a leader of high character. The chief complaint we have to make is that too few are so spoiled. Professor Kelly Miller, of Howard University, says :

It is sometimes objected that the higher education unfits the Negro for the work which he has to do, by lifting him above the masses. True, there are some colored people, as there are some whites, whose cranial expansion is out of all proportion to the knowledge which is supposed to cause it. If nature designs one for a fool no amount of education can alter that design.

But the fault is not in higher education ; it is in the man, or teacher, or the education sometimes called "higher," but which is in truth "lower," or sometimes in all three combined. Bishop Haygood, at the dedication of the library of Gammon Theological Seminary, in an address which for breadth of vision and comprehension of the facts of the education of the Negro has not recently been surpassed, said :

If theological schools are good for white peoples, with a thousand advantages, they are good for colored people, with a thousand disadvantages. There are dangers incidental to education, but safety is not found in abridging education, but in enlarging and bettering it. The only cure for the incidental evils of education is more education.

Pope warns us against the dangers of superficial education, while Bacon says that "slight tastes of philosophy may perchance move one to atheism, but fuller draughts lead back to religion."

In the next place, an equal right to the blessings of life carries with it the truth that every man should have the privilege of developing according to his capacity. This may be called a distinctively American victory. When the masses of Europe were bound, hand and foot, mind and soul, with the chains forged by czarism, monarchy, oligarchy, American democracy rang out the shibboleth, "Equality of opportunity." The most philosophic and common-sense putting of the advent and rule of the people against the domination of the few is in the immortal words of our greatest American commoner, "A government by the people, of the people, and for the people." The privileged class is fast retreating before the steady advance of the Demos. America cannot exist and perpetuate her institutions with one class free to be liberally educated and to

pursue the instincts, ambitions, and aspirations of their nature within the limits of law, and another class hedged in, pressed back, discouraged from seeking the highest attainable culture, and shut up to elementary and industrial training. The Negro is a human personality, and, as such, every attribute within him should be cultured, and every aspiration given free scope. This will not destroy his identity. He will become a cultured man and a man of power.

Second, He needs the higher education because of what it will do for him. Higher education is the only education that properly educates mind and develops character for service. Who needs this culture more than the Negro? Forty years ago he was the ignorant plantation hand, blurting out his wants in broken English and living in a state of almost animalism, with few exceptions here and there to show the horror of the broken state. That condition was suited to the state of slavery, in which the quasi-man was driven and directed with bit and whip. But a state of civil liberty, or with even theoretical civil and political equality, requires a different kind of culture. This new man will remain a nonentity unless he be brought into the thought-life of the nation. He needs the toning and elevation of character that comes from long years of study in the secondary and higher institutions, through personal contact with a true teacher; and, other things being equal, the more perfect will be the development of character. Thought makes character. The better the thinker the better the workman. It is thought that rules the world, not money, and certainly not muscle or skill. The power to do a thing well comes from the power to think a thing well. It is not more workmen that are needed, but more intelligent workmen. The strength to lift a hundred pounds represents a splendid physical development, but it is of the earth earthy; but the power to order a hundred pounds to lift is of the brain brainy. The Negro has had strength, muscular strength, but he has been lacking in power, brain power; and brain power comes from books, for books contain the crystallized thought and power of the ages. He could drive a mule, or dig a ditch, or plow a furrow, or hew down a tree. But mule drivers and ditch diggers and wood cutters are not the

men that make civilization. Thinkers make it. The power of close, analytical, logical, and consecutive thought comes from years of patient investigation of books. This, with the proper ethical study and examples and spirit, makes character. The Negro had no proper development of character until after January 1, 1863. Neither slavery nor the teachers of slavery could develop properly the character of the enslaved. The teacher that teaches his pupils the idea of inferiority is an imperfect, hence inferior, teacher. But for the *ante bellum* teachers to teach the enslaved Negro the equality of mind, in its essential, divine, and human endowments, would have destroyed slavery between one day's suns. For equality of mind and soul would lead as conclusively to equality of rights as that two and two lead to four. It is scarcely believable that anything contrary to this was taught. And, stranger still, we shake hands daily with the wiseacres who believed and taught to the contrary. The enslaved was taught that "black" is inferior to "white;" that kinky hair is the sign of kinky brain; and that God designed from all eternity that the Negro should be a servant of servants. The mark upon Cain and the drunken debauch of Noah were used to confirm the so-called truth in the dark mind of the pagan, and this was done without regard or knowledge of the historical difficulty and exegetical absurdity contained therein. Now, that sort of training, if it should be dignified with the term "training," has never produced a man. Manhood, not serfhood, is the goal of education. And a college education will do for the Negro just what it has done for other men. President Edward C. Mitchell, of Leland University, New Orleans, a man of rare experience as an educator and writer, said in an address before the American Baptist Home Mission Society, in May, 1896:

What then, I ask, shall we teach the Negro? The answer seems to be as plain as the logic of common sense. Let us teach him what our colleges and universities were founded to teach. Let us teach him the only thing left us to teach. Let us teach the only thing the Negro cannot do as well for himself. Let us teach the thing which the experience of the ages and the matured judgment of all true educators has decided to be essential for the full development of manhood. Let us teach the Negro what he is, and what he is as God made

him in his physical and mental structure. Let us teach him what the world is that God has made for him with all its elements and powers and forces. . . . In short, let us give him such glimpses of the whole range of science as shall tax his powers to the utmost, while it takes the conceit out of him and brings him nearer to the supreme discovery of Socrates that he "knows nothing."

If we are to have man, we must have mind, for mind-idea is man-idea. With Hamilton mind is the greatest thing in the world.

Third, The Negro needs the higher education to prepare him for leadership. It goes without saying that the leaders of a race ought to be well educated. Until very recently the race has been without proper leaders. Men so styled came to the front suddenly because they possessed certain powers of representation. It is true, also, that many of these self-styled leaders were deficient in that rudimentary training, and in the essentials of a well-balanced character, to give them anything like permanent leadership. The whole time since freedom has been occupied in preparing leaders for this people in the pulpit, at the bar, in the sick room, in the school room, and in business and industrial callings. And, although we have been severely occupied for a generation, the fact is patent to those who have carefully studied the situation that the need for educated leaders is painfully felt. The work has just begun. Commissioner Harris, speaking of the lack of higher education among Negroes, has this to say :

This is particularly unfortunate for this portion of the community, since it, more than any other, requires a body of cultured persons within itself to oppose the adventurous persons who, by reason of their pleasing theories or ingenious arguments, are apt to be the advisers, and in a stable government are always bridled by the calm wisdom of a small, but all-powerful, class of thoughtful people.

This people depends almost entirely upon its ministry, who shape the destiny, as well as direct the lives, of the people in all practical affairs. Their voice is the voice of the oracles of God, and from their word there is no appeal. The Negro is a deeply religious being. The Church holds first place in his life. He prays, sings, worships, and feasts there. It is a place for mental, social, civil, and religious instruction and inspiration, and even for political direction. His

unsophisticated heart, like the ancient Hebrew, prays to be hid in God's "pavilion." The minister in that pulpit is the president of a university, the university of the masses. He teaches language and science, philosophy and history, ethics and mathematics, hygiene and law, civics and economics, and finally the weightier matters of the law that touch upon "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." What should be the equipment of this man? Should it be anything short of the best, the most thorough, the most comprehensive liberal training in mathematics, science, philosophy, language, literature, history, and finally in the discipline of a classical theological course? Moreover, he is to handle a book that is the *thesaurus* of the wisdom of the ages, written by men who wrote and spoke Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Egyptian, Greek, Latin; by men who were statesmen, orators, lawgivers, naturalists, philosophers, exegetes, poets, historians, preachers, teachers, musicians, generals, practical men; written in Africa, Asia, Europe, upon almost every subject that touches upon and breaks through the periphery of eternity. That preacher is to handle this book; it is his only book. What training ought he to have? Who dare say that he should not receive the best in the land? The declaration of the American Baptist Home Mission Society answers the question:

We would give them the very best education that the present advancement of educational science and their own capacity and our own means render possible. We are not responsible for doing what is beyond our power; but, up to the limits of our power, we believe that the highest attainable is the will of God.

No course can take the place of the college course for the proper development of the character of the minister, that he may wisely, prudently, and conscientiously pursue his calling in shaping characters and in lifting a race; no course is so valuable as the seven or eight years of patient, consecutive, and laborious work in the college, and then in the broader fields of university special training in the theological seminary. He needs it, and ought to have it, to fit him to do practical work. Such an argument will apply to the study of law, medicine, pedagogy, and political economy.

The American system of industrial training, particularly as

it applies to the South in the schools for colored people, failed in making the first-class leaders this race so much needs. It cannot produce the men that can take and mold a raw, green, restless, uneducated race of freedmen, with notions of servility in its blood and of inferiority because of color and untoward circumstances, and because of a history of servitude and sorrow, into a race of freemen with sober and dignified ideas of life; and it cannot give the trend to their luxurious African nature, that, in deed and in truth, we may be able to say, "Princes have come out of Egypt, and Ethiopia has stretched out her hands unto God." It takes men of brain and heart for this work; men who know God and history; men whose sympathies are universal. But universal sympathies are developed by universal studies. Industrial training serves an excellent purpose in giving to the masses an immediate bread-and-butter knowledge, a workable knowledge of tools and language. Many have gone out from these schools and have become workmen that needed not to be made ashamed, for they applied themselves with the rudimentary knowledge to secure an increase of knowledge. On the other hand, a much larger proportion sink below mediocrity as journeymen in their respective trades, and are not heard of or seen in the battle of life. Now, by parity of reasoning, the failure of the majority should be made the basis of an argument against the industrial school. But such a proceeding would brand one as purblind. While on the subject of a practical education in the common branches of the English language, the deficiency is still greater. A pertinent question is, What is practical? Only one answer can be given to this question, and that is, truth. It is sometimes claimed that a practical knowledge, or a mastery of the English language, may be obtained in an industrial training school. We ask, Can one secure a mastery of, or a practical knowledge of, the English language in a three or five year course in an industrial school? The road to the mastery of the English language runs through Athens and Rome. Before leaving Athens he must turn to the left to visit Jerusalem, and make a short trip through Asia Minor; thence to Rome; from Rome through Berlin; thence to Paris; and from Paris he must make a short trip to Madrid and back

again to Paris ; thence across the English Channel to Wales ; and from Wales to Scotland, through Edinburgh, and, finally, down to Oxford and Cambridge. The question would then be, Canst thou speak English ? English is the most composite, versatile, and comprehensive language in the world. It has laid all the great languages under contribution. It is like the English people ; it sweeps around the globe, seeking what it may devour that is best in other tongues. And no man can have a mastery of the English language who does not know Greek. Many men can speak the language, but they speak an unknown tongue.

The sneering remark of Mr. R. C. Ogden, of Hampton Institute, quoted by Dr. Wayland with approval, was, " There are colored men walking up and down our streets who have studied Latin and Greek, but who cannot put together an English sentence, and who cannot earn their own living." This statement has an edge in the hilt as well as in the point. It may be applied with equal propriety to white men. The iniquity of this situation is not in having " studied Latin and Greek," but in not having studied them enough ; for the man who studies Latin and Greek enough can put an English sentence together, will understand it, and has power to earn a living. A further trouble with this particular incident is found in two facts, namely, that the colored man had not been taught the mouth words of English in slavery by his Southern master. He murdered the king's English because he had had no teacher. In the second place, it is possible that the teacher he had when he came to school did not understand enough of Latin to teach English ; hence, the Latin must be defective, and the English the same. This same argument can be made against any discipline of learning imperfectly taught. One chief trouble with our system of instruction is its haste, and haste makes waste. Americans believe in a quickly gotten learning which they call practical. The general characteristic of this kind of teaching is its uncertainty, inaccuracy, and consequent worthlessness. Inaccurate knowledge is not knowledge. Some teachers are very uncertain in their groundwork. Says Dr. Wayland, concerning the inefficiency of Southern schools :

At best the knowledge of the classics which can be given will be but a smattering. A smattering of many subjects—of hygiene, mathematics, history, chemistry—a very moderate knowledge of the rudiments of these subjects may be of great service; but nothing is more futile and useless than a smattering of the rudiments of Latin and Greek, which for the want of practical usefulness will soon be totally forgotten.

Read this backward, and you get the full force of his conclusion. A smattering knowledge of chemistry can never make a decent cook; a smattering knowledge of hygiene makes an unsafe nurse; and a smattering knowledge of mathematics and history makes a smattering teacher. And the Negro in many cases has only had time to get a smattering knowledge of a few things since freedom. Before freedom he was totally blind; now he can only see men as trees walking; but, with the continued application of the salve of a genuine and accurate liberal education, he will receive perfect sight in time. To criticise him now, because he sees so imperfectly, discovers little knowledge of the fact and less of sympathy for the subject. The little learning that some have received has intoxicated them; but the wiser ones are drinking deeper and pursuing steadily the high ideals of thought in scholarship and manhood revealed through intelligence.

In September, 1896, the attention of the philanthropic North was called by these words to the principle involved in this recent cry to change the colleges into industrial training schools:

It should be borne in mind in this entire discussion that, so far as the North is concerned, and, particularly so far as the Christian people in the North are concerned, the critical point in the entire matter is, whether the Negro schools now carried on in the South by Northern Churches shall lower their grade and become mere trade schools and content themselves with giving an industrial education which looks almost entirely to the material welfare of the Negro, or whether they shall continue to be, what they have been in the past, institutions of learning which have encouraged the Negroes to aspire after the highest and the best forms of culture, which have recognized the Negro's manhood and appealed to his highest ambition, and have sought to fit him for leadership and for competition with the white man on his own chosen field and with his own weapons.

The Negro, however, realizes that the secondary and higher education are of paramount necessity for leadership in all the

callings of life, and he intends to help maintain the college character of his Southern colleges.

Fourth, The Negro needs the college education as the best equipment for life. It is not to be denied that the common school education, the grammar school education, the normal school education and training, and the industrial school training each and all play their part in life. It is to be added, further, that these various grades of educational development, as they are made perfect in the disciplines they contain, are sufficient to all practical purposes for life's duties in the respective calling of the applicants, and that, in so far, they serve their purpose well. We would go a step further, and admit that it is barely possible that each in his station will find that the general system of education has outlined a sufficiency of discipline to give character, permanence, and success in the respective departments of life; that is to say, the normal course of educational training, as marked out in the general system of education, is a perfect normal course, and if strictly followed will make teachers who will perpetuate the normal educational system. The teacher so trained will be a normal teacher, and do his or her work perfectly. And so on. But these are but parts of one large and perfect discipline, through the college course and up to the university. The high character and permanency of the normal course is derived from the broad, liberal college course. It received dignity because there stands back of it its great big brother. In fact, the normal course is an abridged college course, and can only have respectability as it should keep company in spirit and homage with the college course. And hence, with us, the men and women who have taken our high normal course may be said to have the higher education. The college course is like the blazing sun in the heavens, that gives light and power to all the courses that sweep around it. These courses can be seen only as they come within the range of its life-giving rays. They belong to the college system, and are arranged with reference to the college idea, and live as the college idea lives. Says another on this point:

It is a well-known philosophical principle that that which is first in order of time is last in order of thought, and *vice versa*. The higher

education is the last thing that the individual pupil reaches; it is what he looks toward as the end. But from the point of view of the teachers, from the point of view of the educational system, the higher education is the very source and center and beginning of it all; and if this is wanting the whole must collapse. Take away the higher education, and you cannot maintain the level of the lower; it degenerates, it becomes corrupt, and you get nothing but pretentiousness and superficiality as the residuum. In order to maintain the lower education which must be given to the South, you must have a few well-equipped institutions of higher learning.

It is also not to be denied that a college education is the most practical education in the world, and that it will not hinder but render the performance of the common duties of life easier, with greater alacrity, satisfaction, and perfection. A cultured lady of New England writes: "My whole life is wider in its sympathies and interest because of my college training. And the mental discipline I regard as a not unimportant factor in my domestic life. That I am a better cook, because I am a college-bred girl, is a proud boast with me." A cultivated mind is the ultimate object of a college course, and such a mind is the best equipment for any calling in life or any duty upon man. Commissioner Harris has well said: "Education, intellectual and moral, is the only means yet discovered that is always sure to help a people to help themselves. It produces that divine discontent which goads on the individual and will not let him rest."

The college education of the Negro is about in the same state of acceptance and perfection as the college education of the white woman. Here is a strange anomaly in history. All the questions that affect the Negro's capacity, rights, privileges, and duties are the very questions that affect the white woman. It is safe to say, moreover, that the complete emancipation of the white woman will not take place until the black man is set free in all that belongs to manhood. History cuts some strange pranks, but God is behind history. Every now and then a croaker from the stagnant pond of mediævalism groans out, "You are spoiling the women by teaching them Latin and Greek; you are breaking down the womanhood of the race by subjecting our girls to the ordeals of a college course." Nevertheless, the American girl moves on gently, winning

laurel after laurel, opening door after door, until now these very same croakers are pleading with Negroes to save them from defeat at the hands of the officious American girls. But we will not.

There is a class of religious teachers who are greatly concerned lest the Negro be educated out of his place. They have chosen his place for him and said that God orders that he keep his place forever. The Rev. Dr. Steele is the mouth-piece for this class. His editorial, "On the Wing," of October 31, 1895, charges that the experiment of the North has failed, and that "*hic haec, hoc* will be the ruin of the African. He needs sensible, sympathetic, kindly instruction from those of us who know his place and will see that he don't get out of it." His arrogant claim of exclusive knowledge of a race's place is paralleled only by its pretentiousness. Error dies hard, but it dies; for it has been struck under the fifth rib by the arrow of truth, and it "writhes in pain and dies among its worshipers." This same "on-the-wing" editor in an attempt to explain thus says what he means by "having the Negro keep his place," and adds a charitable view of Negro education:*

I was misunderstood in the idea that we would make the Negro keep a servile place. By making him keep his place I mean we believe in teaching him the practical industries of life. Providence has fixed his place in the social system of the country as a servant, and the education he needs is an education that will enable him to fill his place. Music, *belles-lettres*, higher mathematics, the profession—the Negro doesn't need this. It unfit him for the place he must fill down here.

It is to be regretted that the article was regarded as having come from a "friend of the race." He says that "Providence has fixed his place." This is the old argument of forty years ago. Providence fixed his place in slavery, said the teachers of that period, but Providence changed it once, and Providence may change it again. That any man of affairs or practical knowledge should claim that the Negro does not need music, when he is nearly all music, the only original music maker in America, puts a strain upon intelligent men to hear him.

It was the lamented Bishop Atticus G. Haygood, of the same

* *Zion's Herald*, December 11, 1895.

Church, who put the questions upon this editorial, "On the Wing," in his calm, comprehensive, judicial, and philosophical article, the last that came from his pen before his translation. He said : *

When it is affirmed that the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church among the Southern Negroes is a failure, let charity spread her wings; it is not malice but ignorance that speaks. Unfortunately, however, ignorance has a capacity not easy to reckon. It has led to great wars; also to long, bitter, and unprofitable newspaper discussions. . . . Few of our leading men have even now any true or accurate knowledge, from personal inspection of any of these institutions. It is simply true that most Southern men know next to nothing about this work. Not one woman among thousands knows anything at all about this work. . . . Few Southern men have enough knowledge of school or Church work among Negroes to write or speak about these things. But such ill-timed remarks as are sometimes made in speech or print do not truly represent the South—much less Southern Methodism. . . . The graduates of these schools, with rarest exceptions, like the educated men of white schools, are not the men who commit nameless crimes.

One of the battles America is set to fight is that of the masses against the classes. Our legislation and our education are for the masses. It is a false view to hold that places are for individuals. The correct view is, individuals for places. The Negro believes in serving; he has served for generations when service was counted a disgrace by men of the South. He has searched for the roots of trees with his faithful ax, and to-day, with his incisive and penetrating mind, he also discovers the roots of Greek verbs; and he will continue in the doing of this double service until the South shall understand that it is as honorable to split wood as to split verbs.

It is said he must serve, and he picks up the challenge and answers back, "Yes." He is willing to serve with spade and plow, with saw and hammer; to work with the trowel and hoe, at the driving wheel and throttle; with the sledge hammer and trip hammer; in the school room and in the sick room; in the pulpit and at the bar. He is also willing and means to work with the sword and with the pen; with the microscope and telescope; at the bench and in the laboratory; with electricity and with steam; he is ready to work in clay, in wood,

* *Northern Christian Advocate*, January 1, 1890.

in iron, in brass, in glass, in stone; and he claims the right to work in earth or sky, anywhere, everywhere, wherever human foot has trod the soil or human thought evolved an idea; and then he insists upon his right to rise into the higher world of thought for superiority of contribution to the progress of civilization, to vindicate his right and title to citizenship in the republic of thought. This is his humble ambition, nothing more, nothing less.

It is now too late to attempt to return to a simple English education, or to a so-called practical industrial education for the Negro. He has had a taste of the good things of a liberal education, and shouts back to these would-be friends,

The shackle ne'er shall bind again
This mind which now is free.

The gods do not take back their gifts to men. The North is free and open with her great colleges and universities. Moreover, there are Negroes among them who understand the discipline of mathematics from addition to integral calculus, who can accurately set a dentil and mathematically calculate an eclipse; others who can read modern Greek, and who know classic Greek from Xenophon's *Anabasis* or Plato's *Republic* to Aristotle's *Logic*; others who have waded through the Latin of Cicero; others who have studied the sciences and can dissect the brain of a bird as well as that of a man; others who have the historical instinct and historical ability to draw lessons from the past for the present. In fact, there is scarcely a department of learning now taught in the colleges of the land that cannot be supplied with a colored instructor able to fill it with credit and honor. And, what is still more significant, nearly every one of these men is now engaged in the battle of life, doing genuine practical work.

Concerning the subject of the Negro's place, we may be privileged to repeat our conviction upon this point: *

Before asking now, What is the Negro's place in American civilization? a larger question comes into notice that affects all men, namely, What is the place of any branch or family of the human race in the sum total of humanity? The man who attempts to answer this question will risk his wit. The Negro's place will be what he makes for himself, just as the

* From an address at the formal opening of the Negro Building, at the Atlanta Exposition, October 21, 1893.

place of every people is what that people makes for itself; and he will be no exception to the rule. The method whereby he shall make that place is under consideration. One class contends that he must make it by staying in the three "R's," and they are specially at pains in ridiculing the higher education of the Negro, even for leaders in Church or State. Yea, he must learn the three "R's," he must master the king's English. And then he must plume his pinions of thought for a flight with Copernicus, Kepler, and Herschel; he must sharpen his logic for a walk with Plato, Emanuel Kant, and Herbert Spencer; he must clarify his visions for investigations with Virchow, Huxley, and Gray; he must be able to deal in the abstruse questions of law as do Gladstone, Judge Story, and Judge Speer; he must fortify himself to divide rightly the word as do Canon Farrar, Bishop Foster, Bishop Haygood, Dr. John Hall, and Dr. H. L. Wayland. In short, the education of the Negro must be on par with the education of the white man. It must begin in the kindergarten, as that of the white child, and end in the university, as that of the white man. Anything short of this thorough preparation for all of the stages of life for the Negro would be unfair to a large part of humanity. We ask that nothing be done that would spoil his nature or emasculate his personality; but let everything be done that would fit him to fill every station in life that man may fill, from the blacksmith and hod carrier to the statesman and philosopher. And, if such preparation require a knowledge of the old blue-back spelling book or of Aristotle's *Logic*; a knowledge of the plow or the trip hammer or of the spade or of the driving wheel; or of simple addition or integral calculus; or the First Reader or Kant's *Critique*, simple justice and common sense require that he be acquainted with whatever shall fit him to fill his station in life.

Now, if this process of education, which aims at developing his powers, making him a better man, a thoughtful man, a respectable citizen, a man of character and judgment, will spoil him, then let him spoil, and the sooner he spoils the better. If truth, pure, unmixed, is an enemy to a man, a system, a State, or society, then let that truth be proclaimed and that man or State go down. Education is not to make places for men, but men for places. The Negro is not discouraged; God has struck the shackles from our feet and the manacles from our wrists, and, please Him, with our right arm we'll do the rest and find our place.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. W. E. Bowen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the width of the name.