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COMMUNICATIONS.

The True Question of the Day—No. 2.

BY E. H. ROGERS.

A delusive appearance of prosperity as deceptive as the wrecker's gold, deceives our influential classes, and leads them to develop social and moral reform in the treatment of symptoms, while the disease which afflicts the vitals is neglected.

Prohibitory laws and Tenement houses remove outward exposures, and should receive the support of good men and women, but vicious industrial and financial ideas strike deep into the soul, they decide the character of the larger portion of our deeds, and it is quite evident are controlling our civilization—so far as their influence goes—with ever downward tendencies.

Our towns and cities are largely peopled by a class who own their homes, but contribute nothing toward the support of religious institutions. Their income at first would not allow them to do so, and lay by anything. If a married pair neglect worship, they can save in pew rent, contributions, dress, and social expenses, from fifty to one hundred dollars a year; ten such years gives them the control of a modest tenement, and forms habits which are apt to remain for life. Religious zeal deplores this aspect of the times; but all its inquiries for the cause are superficial. This influence is so marked, that I have known a couple who were strongly attached to Sabbath institutions, to withdraw from worship for a series of years, until the purpose named above was accomplished.

The authorities in Political Economy have laid much stress on the assumed advantages of savings in giving independence to the laborer; that this has been over-estimated has been shown in the talented essay I have already referred to.

It does not yet appear to have obtained influential credence, that one of the heaviest burdens at present resting upon labor, comes from the class of property holders. When wages sink, as they do in periods of depression to the lowest point, nothing in my whole experience has seemed to me more painful than to see those who were living comfortably in their own homes underbidding their destitute companions, and, as is a common practice, taking jobs which will only net them from fifty cents to a dollar a day. I aver that the instances of workmen laying out of work, and resisting a fall in wages, because they have property, are almost entirely imaginary, while the instances to the contrary are numerous and disastrous in the extreme.

To be out of work during the winter is to be burdened with debt all the next summer; having no rent to pay they bring down their family expenses to the lowest point, and in clearing themselves from financial burdens, crowd toward pauperism those who are less favorably situated.

These practices, which are the logical result of the application of the law of supply and demand to industry, would instantly call down social odium upon a professional man, who should abate his fees with such motives.

I have walked through whole streets of residences of our middle classes, both of trade and industry, where the invisible sign attached to each home told of one or the other of these customs, and spoke with eloquent tongue of ultimate ruin to the nation where they are allowed to exist.

RELATION OF RELIGION TO LABOR.

Defensive warfare is the highest exercise of manual force; a significant incident from an experience in this direction occurs to me as the magnitude of the industrial question presents itself. During a day of release from duty in a Southern city, a robust freedman was observed engaged in work peculiar to my own calling, conversation ensued, bonds were told of continuing till the war, a skilful mechanic, paying three or four hundred a year to his owner, besides rearing a family; in reply to my statement of our obligation to law, and of the painful situation in which we of the North had been placed; saying with dignity, without previous religious allusion, "we knew it, and we prayed for you."

The Disciple of the Methodist Episcopal Church contains the only authoritative human recognition of this great question which I have met with. Page thirty-one enjoins Christians to "avoid laying up treasures upon earth;" page seventy-three calls upon the preachers to notice the "want of moral honesty in the general neglect of the Golden Rule in buying and selling."

I have in my possession recent sermons, lectures, and legislative speeches from divines and lawyers of the highest repute, the direct result of whose teachings and arguments is to release the property instinct in its immediate relation to labor from all high religious control.

One of the first chapters of the Bible plainly sets forth manual labor as a curse, and its last words are those of warning to all who shall take from its meaning. Public opinion controlled by mammon worship says it is a blessing, and applauds sentimental eulogies of its "Dignity." "Multiply and replenish the earth" is the Divine command. In neglect of marriage and contempt of labor the ruling interest of society justifies disobedience. The injunction to "owe no man" finds a petty personal application, while gigantic institutions demoralize society by credit currency without rebuke. Large interests in our community are laboriously engaged in doing nothing; they wait the swelling of one of the financial tides I have described, which fills their coffers, and enables them to live until the operation can be repeated.

This whole question turns upon an equitable distribution of labor and its rewards, and it involves issues which cannot be met successfully by unaided human wisdom.

The grossest license to the social instinct, gives the tone to law and custom in Utah. In past ages, whole races have exalted two of our executive faculties, and in feudal pride, have "cursed those of their lineage born, who sheath the sword, to reap the corn." A more refined propensity controls modern society, but none the less disastrous in its tendencies. The sublime faith which lighted the house of bondage, and led to the grandest practical results, points out the path of duty to the nation, in its efforts to free itself from the slavery of the soul, involved in the gross defects of our industrial system.

Labor cannot for an instant relinquish its claim upon the State, but its triumph will linger, until it commands the spiritual forces of the Christian church in delivering itself from the control of influences which violate in their essential features the precepts of the gospel.

With an extract from the French statesman, Thiers, I commend these inadequate remarks to all who are laboring for the deliverance of our race from evil.

"Europe is marching toward the republic; but you young men must not deceive yourselves. By the faults of governments, which sometimes yield when they ought to be firm, and sometimes resist when they ought only to curb and direct, this century will see only the period of transition, a transition which will be bloody, terrible, and which I thank God I am not to see. The blending of social and political, of interior and exterior problems, is such at this period that nations are fatally forced to decide all questions by suppressing all. But violent suppression and solution are two things, and shift them as you please, questions will still exist as threatening as ever.

"It is only when the New World, which is already tearing the flanks of the Old, shall have acquired enough of virility and of wisdom to vanquish and to decide, that an *economical republic* will bring back order and peace to our society."

From Books or Experience?

BY RICHARD THEODORE GREENER.

If we may trust the dictionary makers, to be wise is to know how to attain the best ends by the best means. Unfortunately, in this wicked world, many good people frequently differ in regard to what is the best end, and much oftener are diametrically opposed as to the means. But a small portion of mankind, after all, write books, notwithstanding their multiplicity, and a ridiculously small portion read them with any idea of profit connected with the perusal.

On the contrary, every one, from earliest childhood on to old age, has, whether he will or not, thousands of opportunities for observations, and innumerable experiences, agreeable and the reverse, which go to make up his character and determine the relative amount of his wisdom.

If books gave us perfectly accurate pictures of the ways and customs of the world, and were every man, woman, and child compelled to study them with a view to their profit, we might, with some show of reason, expect to gain as much wisdom from books as we do from observation and experience. The mass of books are poorly written, and, like the mass of men who write them, full of inaccuracies, misstatement of facts, perversions of truth, or are written entirely with a partisan basis.

An impartial book, like an honest, impartial man, is a rarity.

The best of them, in the sense of the most accurate, leave out some of the most repulsive features of life, or insert some unrecognizable one. It is only those which have approached as near as they dare to real human experience, or have diverged as far as possible from it, that have had the most influence, and are destined to live the longest.

Cervantes makes the grotesque Don Quixote mingle with the coarse, deceptive world, ere his ideas of chivalry are modified. Dickens exposes little Oliver to the tender mercies of the thieves and outlaws of London. At one time, it is Nancy Sykes teaching us that even the lowest phase of womanhood, though trained in sin, yet possesses some trait of that tender humanity which not even a Fagin nor a Bill Sykes can subdue. At another, it is Copperfield, "young, very young, sir," worshipping the pretty doll Dora, until death, wider experience and trust betrayed find a manlier love in the charming, womanly Agnes.

Gil Blas wanders up and down, to and fro, now in poverty, now in wealth, in search of wisdom, and at last he finds it.

Fielding, consummate master, makes Tom Jones a hero such as we may see to-day It is by actual contact with this vain world that he learns wisdom. Fielding, like Milton, to compare extremes, "cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat."—Areop. It was from that varied experience in life, that Rabelais could so well describe the salient traits of the hypocritical Benedictines, the shoemaker, the physician, bookseller, secretary of an embassy, preacher, simply because he had served an apprenticeship at all of them. Men who have seen life; may write for our delectation about it ever so vividly, but after all, we must meet it and grapple with it ourselves.

On the printed page, vice may lose its disgusting traits, and poverty, "silently clamorous," may not affect us as it does when seen face to face. But when we meet pride, caste, and bigotry under the mask of piety, or see crystalized dogmatism and selfishness under the guise of philanthropy, when we find friends deceiving, insincere, double minded, then do we learn the lesson as we never could acquire it from books.

We do not say that all literature should become, as the drama of the day, intensely realistic. On the contrary, we need the ideal to balance the real; else we lose faith in humanity. In life, and in literature as in metaphysics, idealism and realism will undoubtedly succeed each other at regular intervals. The only fear is that we shall not, in one day, give realism in literature its proper share. We are swinging towards it, however, and books are becoming more probable in their plots. "Give us life as it is," demands the age, "not the prurient details, but life, without its gala dress, its paint and feathers."

The "good boy" of the story books, whose ethereal mildness, and precocious intellect so excited our early survey, has been translated, while his pugnacious, black haired, dirty faced companion, who would not study, but who would rob birds nests and play marbles in earnest, still lives, perhaps through some oversight on the part of Providence, and is gallantly stemming his way in the tough battles with the world. The "bad boy," in fact, is taking his place in literature, and Charley Bates, through the agency of reformatory institutions, becomes an eminently respectable merchant, giving with sagacity to deserving charity, but detecting sham afar off.

If we never forgot anything we read, or if reading merely could make as indelible an impression upon us as our experience and observations, we might then claim an equal share for mere book knowledge with these severer masters. Do we wish to become professional or business men, it is the practice in these, oftentimes more than the theoretical knowledge, which makes us successful.

This, often overlooked by men of books, is one great cause of failure. It is not so much what men know as what they can use, that tends to success. The man of letters has an advantage in the general view of life which books may give him; but this is of trivial import, unless tested by experience. The man of enlarged ideas, great scope of view, may often be passed in the race of life, by some inferior clod of greater concentration, whose horizon is less, but whose application is greater.

One may learn from books that virtue is preferable to vice—that honesty is the best policy—that virtue is its own reward, and many other aphorisms of like import; but all are aware, that it is by bitter experience that these lessons are brought home and enforced.

Not the absence of temptation, of mistakes, or even of sin and remorse, makes the really wise man; but rather, to have made mistakes and retrieved them, to have done wrong, sometimes knowingly, wilfully, and to feel afterwards remorse for it, to have become, in short, wiser and better men and women through our very infirmities, gives one a wisdom not to be found in books alone, but obtained equally by bitter experience and thoughtful observation.

Outrages upon the Freedmen in Georgia.

BY REV. H. W. PIERSON, D. D.

In my pastoral visits at Andersonville, the poor oppressed freedmen were constantly pouring into my ears the sad and harrowing stories of the outrages they endured, and of their utter helplessness and want of protection from the State or federal courts. In addition to those residing there, large numbers of these people came to Andersonville from the surrounding country, for the purpose of placing their children in the Freedmen's School, attending our Sabbath services, or with the faint hope that we might so bring their grievances to the notice of the Government as to afford them some relief.

In addition to those already published by you, I send you the following, which I wrote down from the lips of a preacher who came to A. to place his boy in school, and which will illustrate the condition of things in the regions round about Andersonville:

STATEMENT OF REV. CHARLES ENNIS.

Charles Ennis informs me that he was sixty-two years old last June; that he was the slave of Mr. G. C. McBee, who kept the ferry on the Holston river, fifteen miles from Knoxville, Tenn; that he has often ferried the Hon. Messrs. Brownlow and Maynard over the river; that he learned to read when a small boy, and that he is now a preacher and teacher. He is the most intelligent colored man I have seen at Andersonville.

He says: "My wife has been a midwife for many years, and has attended upon a good many white and colored women in child-birth. Last year we lived in Mitchell county, and Mr. Henry Adams, of Baker county, sent for her to attend upon his wife, who was about to be confined. The child was born and did well. After the riot at Camilla we were afraid to remain in Mitchell county. I lived within three miles of Camilla; and a good many of the dead were very near me—but I did not see any of them. I was afraid to go from home. Dr. Sanders, who attended upon those that were shot, told me that more than fifty were killed and wounded. Mr. Adams said his wife liked my wife so well that he wanted us to go to Houston county with him, and he would pay our expenses there; and then he would certainly get me a school, and I could live on his place with my wife, and he would pay her $50 a year wages. I told him we would not engage for the year, but only by the month, so long as we could agree. Mr. Robert Adams, his uncle, was his partner, and managed the plantation. On the 19th of January, 1869, he told my wife he wanted breakfast very early, as he was going to attend the burying of his nephew's wife next morning. She got up before day and got it, and I carried it to him, and he ate it by candle light. After breakfast, as my wife was going to milk, he came out doors, and when he saw her he said: "O you d—d old b—h, I have catched up to you, you G—d d—d old rogue," and a good deal more of the same sort. I was surprised at this, as I knew she had got the breakfast all right, and I had carried it in to him. I went out and asked him in a mild manner, "Mr. Adams, what is the matter? what has she done?" He made no reply at all, but rushed at me and caught me by the hair and commenced beating me. He struck me several times on the head. I made no resistance at all, but said, "Mr. Adams, I will make you pay for this." This made him still worse, and he took out his knife and said he would give me something to make him pay for—he would kill me.

"Henry Ottrecht, a German, and a colored boy named Wash, caught him, and begged him not to kill me, and told me to promise him that I would not report him. He held on to me until I promised him that I would not report him, and then he let me go. He told these men that he would have killed me, if they had not prevented him. As he started away to attend the burying of his nephew's wife, he said to me, "Now you may go to Perry," (the county seat,) "and report me, if you want; but if you do, I'll be d—d if I don't kill you." At night, my wife heard him tell Chas. Evart, a freedman, about the scrape; and he said he would have killed me, if they had not held him; and he would kill me anyway, if I reported him. I was a slave until freed by the war; but I never received such treatment during all my life as a slave. I waited on officers in the Confederate army from 1862 until the surrender. The last six months I was with Lt. Col. Jones, 2nd Georgia Reserves, at Andersonville. I never received a blow or a harsh word from one of them. I have traveled a great deal, before and since the war. I know that the colored people are more brutally treated now than they were in slavery times. A great many more are beaten, wounded, and killed now than then. I know a great many cases where they have been beaten to death with clubs, killed with knives and dirks, shot and hung. We have no protection at all from the laws of Georgia. We had rather die than go back into slavery; but we are worse treated than we ever were before. We cannot protect ourselves; we want the Government to protect us. A great many freedmen have told me that we should be obliged to rise and take arms and protect ourselves, but I have always told them this would not do; that the whole South would then come against us and kill us off, as the Indians have been killed off. I have always told them the best way was for us to apply to the Government for protection, and let them protect us."

Attest: H. W. PIERSON.

ANDERSONVILLE, Ga., Feb. 10, 1869.

The Modesty of Wisdom.—No. 2.

BY E. R. N.

Indeed, the sage always knows but too well that there is very little reason to rejoice over the results of human wisdom. In view of his proudest discoveries, he feels like one in a little boat, coasting along the shore, with the consciousness that there is still beyond him an immense ocean, whereon thousands of important inventions, thousands of glorious truths, are still tossing about upon the billows of possibility—inventions and truths whose discovery is yet to reward the more adventurous mariner. More than this, too, he feels like that wisest of the children of men, who, after having sounded all the depths of human knowledge, cried out in anguish of heart and in bitterness of spirit, "there is nothing new under the sun."

Human wisdom, wearied with her papyrus scrolls—with her wax and stylus—may have sought and found another medium whereon to stamp the record of her labors and discoveries. But, ere one throb of pride can swell her bosom at this improvement, she learns that the humble wasp has anticipated her researches, and has been manufacturing paper for more than five thousand years. With architectural ingenuity, she may contrive plans whereby to secure the greatest amount of strength and space in her habitations, with the least outlay of materials; but it is only to perceive immediately thereupon that the bee, in the construction of its honey-comb, has labored according to the same principles ever since the dawning of creation.

Even if the proudest efforts of man may not have been thus forestalled by the instinct of the lower animals, still he may discover—to curb the pride of his intellectual strength—that antiquity has left him but little which he can appropriately term his own. From the mouldering rubbish of some ancient pyramid—from the streets and work-shops of some disinterred Pompeii—from the ruined halls of some long-buried Nineveh, he gathers the evidences which declare, that ages far anterior to the one in which he may be living, possessed arts which he had fondly deemed the fruits of his own imagining.

These various reflections, doubtless, tend to lessen that pride which man might otherwise feel in the contemplation of his intellectual power. Not that, in so doing, they detract from the actual benefit which the world derives from every effort of wisdom. Man fills the earth with the proofs of his energy. He constructs machinery which is capable of performing the work of hundreds, at the same time that it is sufficient to minister to the wants of millions of his fellows. To cure the ills which afflict them, he traverses the several kingdoms of nature, and returns bearing with him appropriate remedies. From a careful analysis of their moral nature, he devises laws to restrain the evil-doer, and accomplish the various other beneficent purposes of civil society. The sage reflects and labors; and still, in the performance of all his great and glorious deeds, the individual philosopher feels that he is but doing what others of his class may have, perhaps, effected in some past time, or may, doubtless, far excel at some future day; and, in view of this feeling, he joins to the foresight and calculation of wisdom its humiliation and modesty.

The modesty of wisdom, however, is, plainly, not of that false kind which would deter it from attempting anything that its foresight may suggest. Conservative only in maintaining and guarding its previous acquisitions, it is eminently progressive in the discovery and appropriation of new truths. In the pursuit of these objects, it permits no ridicule to turn it aside, —no danger to affright it. A Lycurgus persists in framing wise and wholesome laws for his beloved Sparta, although personal violence deprive him of an eye while so doing. A Galileo, in the deep gloom of his dungeon, still maintains that the earth moves around the sun. A Columbus wanders poor and unfriended from court to court; for he knows that a world will be the reward of his perseverance. A Harvey braves the sneers of scientific Europe, and risks dying in poverty, rather than resign his theory of the circulation of the blood. Thus ever, like the gallant sages cited, have the martyrs of philosophy marched boldly, yet unassumingly, on to the realization of truths which had as yet no abiding place on earth, save in their own glorious intellects.

Truly, they have their reward. In their lonely midnight closets, they may have restrained the wayward flashes of a bright, but erring genius;—in their after-labors, they may haved toiled on amid the jests and scorn of those for whose benefit they may have been, to the uttermost reach of human capability, self-sacrificing;—in their triumph-hour, they may have modestly demanded the reversal of their sentence of condemnation. That demand is not denied them. The flush of their modesty merges in the halo of their fame. The pillory and the execrations of the mob are exchanged for the statuesque pedestal of their glory, and the acclamations of the multitude. The world, in the conscious enjoyment of a thousand benefactions, blesses their efforts and self-denying struggles, at the same time that it manifests its admiration for the modesty of wisdom.

National Prejudice.

BY S.

All nations have or has had their prejudices, some in relation to one thing and some to another; and these prejudices, whatever their nature, have existed from the earliest periods down to the present.

The plebeians of Rome were constantly subjected, for a long period, to the oppression of the patricians, and it was not until they, goaded by a sense of their wrongs to desperation, asserted their rights, that they finally, after a long struggle, succeeded in occupying some of the highest positions in the Roman Government. And, when we come down to the time of Cicero, we find that the Government had undergone in times past such a change that even social difficulties were laid aside.

Coming down to a still later age, we find prejudice existing in religious matters.

1st. Religion introduced by Constantine and renounced by Julian; and so there was a constant change from Paganism to Christianity, until the time of Justinian, who, with his varied learning, and his genius, like that of Bacon, embraced all the business and knowledge of the age, and at last, if he did not succeed in reconciling the Christian sects, at least promulgated a code of laws which were beneficial in a great degree to all.

During the middle ages the whole system of jurisprudence, as practiced at Rome during its earliest ages, was re-enacted under the reign of Charlemagne. The same distinction existed between nobles and villains as existed at Rome between patricians and plebeians.

Germany was imbued with the same spirit as France during this time; but, at a little later period, we have a new species of aristocracy, founded upon the consideration of tenure and occupation, which sprung out of the feudal system.

England also seemed to be infected with a spirit of prejudice growing out of this system of feuds.

Passing over the histories of other countries, and coming down to a more recent date, we have England and Ireland much agitated over the Irish Land Question. This question is causing much feeling between tenant and landholder, and the advocates of each; but, without doubt, the question will be settled, after a while, amicably to all.

England also at one time had as much prejudice against the African race as America has at this day; but such as Wilberforce, with his great philanthropic spirit, and Geo. Thompson, who was sent to finish the work commenced by Wilberforce, so brought it about by their exertions, that the negro now enjoyed the same rights, both politically and socially, as an Englishman.

France followed in the train of England, and gave us the same rights.

America, after England and France have shown her that all men are equal—that a man, even of an oppressed race, can accomplish as much as any other with the same advantages—after a Garrison a Phillips and a Douglass have labored constantly for it—after a four years' war has shown her that the negro is entitled to the rights of citizenship, America has at last granted it. Although this has been conceded to us, prejudice is great yet with the American people; but as we continue to hold positions as Lieutenant Governors, as Congressmen, as consuls, as judges, as cadets, and fill these positions creditably, as we will, then the march of prejudice from our midst will be perceptible, and finally we will be consolidated into one great people, dispensing right and justice to all.

Our Progress in the Old Bay State.

BY B. F. ROBERTS.

It may be of some interest to the readers of the NEW ERA to learn a little of the past of our people in Massachusetts. Many of our colored citizens here are the immediate successors of men who lived in this State during our Revolutionary struggle, and patriotically aided other colonists in throwing off "Britain's yoke," and substituting therefor a form of government rivalling in the short space of a century all the governments of the present day. From March 5, 1770, when Crispus Attucks gave his life-blood in one of our public streets in Boston, the first martyr to freedom, who, with his associates who fell at the time, was buried with honors from Faneuil Hall, in the Granary Cemetery, at the foot of Boston Common, the headstone at the grave, with appropriate description, marking the spot where he lies, conclusively settles the question of our identity in the establishment of the Government.

History informs us that there were others who were on the battle-fields of Concord, Lexington, and Bunker's Hill, who, side by side with white soldiers, rushed into the fight "to do or die," and their ashes are mingled with the slain who fell in defending the right. There has been no trouble in the Government, but colored men have been found actively engaged in rendering such assistance as deserves the grateful appreciation of the people of this nation. But in the clearing up of the war, on the establishing of peace, while the whites were the recipients of the great advantages resulting from the new order of things, the colored people were consigned to ignominy and disgrace, and denied all participation in the social, civil, and political welfare of the community.

Our numbers in this State were small in the early days, and little or no attention was paid to moral, physical, or intellectual training. There was hardly a score of competent mechanics among us in the whole State. There were a few farmers, and the general employments among us were as porters at hotels and stores, hair-dressers, servants in families, and laborers in the most menial pursuits. This condition of things lasted, with very little change, until about forty years ago. About this time, there appeared to be a feeling among a number of our young people that, as an essential to our elevation, it was necessary that self-effort should be thoroughly tried. A manual labor institution was started in North Bridgewater by an enterprising family, where some twenty colored young men were instructed a portion of each day in reading, writing, and arithmetic, at farming, black and white smithing, and shoemaking. The originator of this undertaking was James Easton, a black man, born in Middleboro', in this State, and a Revolutionary soldier. This institution continued only a few years, but the prejudice of the community and the unpopularity of the enterprise, with the lack of pecuniary means to work with, put an end to its existence.

At that time colorphobia deprived us of common school, and a great many other privileges; we were assailed and hooted at in the streets; insults and sneers followed our path, and it was, indeed, a dark day for us all over the commonwealth. A few years after, a young Bostonian commenced antagonism against caste schools, and aimed to bring about a change by the admission of colored children to the common schools. The scheme was unpopular among the old fogies of that day, both white and black, and only a few of our people favored the abolition of exclusive schools, and the benefits of common school instruction for their children. But days and weeks and months and years passed on, and a practical experiment was tried by this young man, who, then being in a more fitting position for work, took his little child one morning and led it to the primary school nearest his residence, and asked the teacher to receive it, which request was favorably responded to. She was admitted and attended school regularly day after day for several months, when an effort to obtain a certificate of admission for another child in the intermediate school was opposed by the subcommittee, who clothed themselves fully with the authority of expelling the former child, because its father positively refused the unnatural and insulting solicitation of continuing it as a pupil to the exclusion of the latter, who could only be admitted to the caste school. A law-suit was commenced by him against the city for damages, (Roberts vs. City of Boston,) and the case was argued in the Supreme Court, by the Hon. Charles Sumner, on a question of law, before the late Chief Justice Shaw and two associate justices, who, blind and deaf to the legal rights of the Massachusetts colored citizen, after a long conference with each other, dismissed the case.

To the Legislature we then repaired for redress, and asked for a special enactment to secure equal school rights. Petitions upon petitions were sent to the General Court, and lengthy hearings granted thereon, during a time, too, when another class were active all over the State to obtain a share of the school fund, and impartial justice stepped in and influenced the minds of the legislators, and a law was passed forbidding any "discrimination in the admission of children to the schools nearest their residences on account of color or race." The doors were thrown wide open, and it was to us the greatest *boon* ever bestowed upon our people. Our children do not feel now as their predecessors felt a thousand times while passing a school-house—as *inferiors* and *outcasts*. To them new ideas are opened; a number are learning trades; there is a growing anxiety to get into the professions, and it will not be many years ere the full results of this glorious change will find many of our successors in the full enjoyment of positions of honor and emolument, and amply competent to cope with the most distinguished citizens in our community.

The reminiscences of the past ten years are fraught with the deepest and most profound astonishment of our people. In no age of the world, and in no country of ancient or modern days has ten times the number of years produced such remarkable changes as we have experienced in every nook and corner of this vast domain. The man of yesterday, borne down by servile oppression, a fugitive and a stranger in the land of his nativity, his limbs galled with chains and fetters, and naught but black despair settled upon his troubled mind, himself, his wife, his child, articles of trade and merchandise for gain, now wrested by the powerful arm of justice from his tormentors, and placed upon the moral platform, untrammeled, free, and supplied with all that is necessary to a fully developed member of the brotherhood of men.

Why, the people of our time, according to the recent revolutions, have surely outlived the oldest man the world has ever produced, and left Methusaleh but an infant in years to them. Who among us can refrain from giving vent to his feelings in the highest exultation over these remarkable events? But amid all this we have important duties to perform. We must be true to each other. We must encourage each other We must devote our energies, if we mean success, to the acquirement of *education*, which is power, and the accumulation of *money*, which will add all that will be necessary to our elevation.

BOSTON, March 22, 1870.

Our Magazine Literature.

BY GEORGE RICE.

Appearances indicate an increasing tendency of the best and most forcible writers of the present time, to enrich with their contributions the pages of our magazines. Although the cause of this is not particularly clear, it seems that the excellent pecuniary inducements offered by competing monthlies, together with the increased scope of perusal their contributions are likely to receive, are the principal agents in producing this phase of our Magazine Literature. The cheapness and increased scope of such literature, is plainly self-evident, for many who could not afford to or would not pay $1.50 for Lowells "Cathedral," in book form, grasp eagerly the Magazine containing it at thirty-five cents. Considering this cheapness alone, there would be no need of seeking any farther for reasons of popularity, if the deductions naturally to be drawn from this particular reason, were not that the cheapest is not always the best. This is certainly true, and could but have a most damaging effect upon the moral and intellectual stamina of our magazines, did not competition step in and make both cheapness and quality two necessary and connecting elements towards the accomplishment of a prosperous existence.

In the leading periodicals, there is manifest a gradual absorption of the productions of our most talented writers. But as an offset to the large extent of perusal their articles receive from the general reader, and the great benefits that are certain to be derived from such a cause, the question arises: will not this limiting and condensing, to the fullest extent possible the powers of our best minds, to the cramped and narrow space that forms an irremediable and necessary feature in the Magazines, have an effect prejudicial to the more mature and perfect development of our literature? The fretwork of superflous adjectives and sentences does not enhance, but rather obscures the clear expression of an idea; and by pruning and condensing, the author's ideas stand defined like the brow of a mountain against a moon-lit sky, when the trees, rocks, crags and inequalities of its surface, disappear and blend in the harmony of the general mass. But it is difficult to limit, without injuring the entire structure, the beautiful drapery of thought and expression with which genius envelopes its ideas; and as it is American *genius* that is to build up American literature, it is to this I refer, and not the efforts of those flippant writers, to whom the columns of all publications, are regarded as nothing but excellent places for the instalment of another's ideas, to be decorated (?) with wreaths of their own flowery adjectives. It is absolutely necessary for the preservation of other men's literary property, and as a preventative against kleptomania in this direction, that such spheres be limited.

Partly owing, I suppose, to the publishing of comparatively inexpensive editions of authors of established reputation, the public are becoming more familiar with the better class in literature. This cause has affected also the magazines; and the enterprise that influences them to-day, is to spare no effort towards securing the best of talent; but in this latter case there is to be feared a damaging and reactionary influence from this ambition to "o'erleap itself." Simplicity and conciseness of style are beautiful traits in literature. But this simplicity becomes a fault when it is carried so far as to limit the legitimate scope and freedom of expression; and while the pages of the magazine form an excellent field for short, sharp, and caustic productions, while their material qualities are so advantageous to the production and dissemination of this style of literature, they are not only disadvantageous, but prejudicial to the more complete and studied creations of genius. It is difficult to prune the plants of genius, or even, as the magazines must necessarily do, prescribe their growth to constrained and narrow limits. The matter of popularity and extent of perusal is as one of the magazines (the "Old and New") expresses it, "no evidence of value, universal suffrage being as fallible in literature as in all other lines of life." There are more admirers of the high forms of genius than readers, simply because it is fashionable and popular to profess admiration for them. The lighter class of literature is yet the most popular; and as popularity is plainly the life and purpose of the magazines in enlisting the services of our most profound thinkers, to still retain this prestige it is necessary that the writer's ideas and productions must succumb to the requirements most essential to the success of the magazine; and hence the sphere of literature becomes constrained and cramped, and we have the unnatural spectacle of public taste in this respect moulding the creations of genius, whereas the reverse should be the case.

Emerson says: "If our times are sterile in genius, we must cheer us with books, of rich and believing men who had atmosphere and amplitude about them." But the want of the writers of to-day is not atmosphere; we have plenty of that. The refinements of civilization, the sublime consciousness of institutions speeding nearer and nearer towards human perfectability, the beautiful statue of human education is reared above the granite foundations of our common schools, all breathe an atmosphere rich with the very inspirations of genius. But it is amplitude we want, room, scope, and freedom as broad as the wide continent we live in.

The New Era.

BY GEORGE WASHINGTON, JR.

This is an eventful period in the history of our nation, and one of which we, as Americans, should be proud. I have carefully observed the transition of more than three millions of our race from bondage to full and equal rights as citizens of this great republic; and while I feel that there is yet much to be done and many sacrifices to be made in fitting ourselves for the positions we are henceforth to occupy among our fellow-citizens, I cannot help a feeling of pride in being connected with a race of people who have proved themselves so worthy to be a part of this great nation.

They have proved this by their patient and persevering efforts under all kinds of difficulties; by their patriotism, which revealed itself in their haste to answer the call of the Government to assist in its defense—aye, in their being among the first to volunteer for the preservation of the Union; and by their gallant services, from which have at length culminated such happy results.

During the last two years I have been brought in constant social contact with many of the leading minds of our people, and I am proud in being able to say, that I have found them, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which we have labored in the past, up to the average of our citizens.

The rapid progress we have made as a people, within a few years, in the acquirement of arts and sciences, and in business—our respect for law—our aspirations—the legislative ability with which we represent constituencies in several of the States of the Union—all prove our manhood, and our just claims to the name and character of citizens.

We must be a unit on all questions which involve our common interests; and, with our united strength, we shall be a power which must be respected. We must feel that whatever affects our welfare as a people affects that of our nation.

Justice is being awarded us with no sluggish hand; the Government has selected from among us gentlemen to fill important positions abroad; and in almost every department at home we are represented. Our laboring men, also, are receiving a share of government employment.

Therefore, we can but feel that the interests of our Government and our own are identical.

We cannot feel too grateful to those tried friends who have battled for us in the darkest hour, and up to this time, with untiring zeal and hope.

They have labored with a consciousness of their duty to their fellow men; and I know that they will feel rewarded in the complete triumph of those fundamental principles which they have so long and earnestly advocated.

"The new era" of our race has commenced. With the ratification of the fifteenth amendment, and from the date of its proclamation as part of the fundamental law of the land, ends all controversy as to our status as American citizens. Then the unhappy past, which has blotted the pages of our nation's history, will recede before the effulgent light of equality until it is lost in the bright future, when we shall be known only as Americans.

We have evidence of the diplomatic ability of our race in the very able manner in which the honor and interests of our country are cared for by our minister to the Republic of Hayti.

The nomination of another of our race to fill another important mission abroad proves that our abilities are recognized; and that henceforth we are to occupy no small or unimportant place in the history of our country.

The time is not far distant when others of us will be called to represent the Government, it may be, at some of the courts in Europe: we must be prepared for such a contingency; and it will be well for us to have these facts constantly before us as an incentive.

We must assume a position on the questions which are of so much importance to the country, and actively co-operate with our friends in the struggle for the final success of Republican principles.

My observations lead me to predict a glorious future for ourselves and our posterity. Therefore, let us throw away no chance to improve ourselves, and let us see to it, that the full force of our faculties be exerted in the behalf of human rights and justice to all mankind.

Acquittal of Prince Pierre Bonaparte.

TOURS, March 27.—Prince Pierre Bonaparte has been acquitted in spite of a strong appeal made by the Procureur General for a verdict of guilty, with extenuating circumstances. The jury were out only one hour. As soon as the verdict was announced, the counsel for the *Partie Civile* demanded 100,000 francs damages. In consequence of this demand the Prince was not released from custody. He was exceedingly indignant because he was not allowed to leave the court-room instantly. He said he wished to show that he was not afraid of the menaces against his life.

In their closing arguments, the lawyers for the defense laid great stress on the constant and violent denunciation of the Prince published in the *Marseillaise*, and on various other circumstances calculated to exasperate the accused.

PARIS, March 27.—The news of the acquittal of Prince Bonaparte produced an immense sensation and astonishment everywhere, and is the universal topic of conversation.

PARIS, March 28.—The High Court at Tours condemned Prince Pierre Bonaparte to pay 25,000 francs to the family of Victor Noir, and also to pay the expenses of the civil suit.