

dancing and shouts of laughter, of which the refrain was:

"I'd rather be a nigger than a poor white man."

When emancipation came, the negro's first feeling was of joy over freedom. To be free meant first to leave "old master" and make a new start with somebody else, who could be called "mister" instead. Second—to leave off manual labor as far as possible. Third—to imitate the wealthier class of whites in every possible way, especially in education, in dress and in the enjoyment of leisure. Had these emancipated slaves continued in the habits of industry, frugality, temperance and economy which they had followed from necessity as slaves, and to which they had become accustomed; had they themselves kept up these habits and transmitted them to their grandchildren, they would now be the owners of most of the land in the south.

That they failed to do so was both natural and necessary. The very master who taught them to labor with skill and cunning, shrank from labor himself as disgraceful and degrading. No wonder the negro, on emancipation, failed to comprehend, much less to use, the great power which he possessed.

The measures taken by the government and the northern philanthropists, after emancipation, were needless, and their effect upon the negro was most unhappy. The issuing of rations to them encouraged habits of laziness. The conferring of political rights and pushing them forward in the political arena, and the interference of the Freedmen's Bureaus, aroused antagonism between the races. Then came the attempt to establish by law the civil and semi-social equality of the races. The entire white population would have preferred death. Race wars were avoided only by the submissiveness of the blacks.

Northern philanthropy was scarcely more fortunate in its attempt to aid the negro. It worked chiefly through education and religion, with visionary, radical and hurtful attempts at social equality and social regeneration. In the many colleges which were established, manual labor departments were rather to furnish pupils a means of finishing their education than to train them for skilled trades. The negro regarded education less as a preparation for labor, than as a means of escaping labor. He was inspired with a desire only for political leadership or for professional power. The best evidence of the real greatness of Booker Washington is that he did not yield to this temptation.

The real struggle of the negro race is industrial. It is a struggle for better living—for better food, better clothing, a better home, for skill in labor, for thrift, economy and industry, for opportunity and ability to earn \$2.00, or \$3.00, or \$4.00 a day instead of ten cents, or thirty cents, or fifty cents. It was the real struggle on emancipation; it will remain the real struggle until the negro wins it, and through victory rises to a higher intellectual, moral, religious, social and political life; or, until he falls and slowly passes out of life, an incompetent.

The remedy, it seems to me, is to do the things that should have been done on emancipation:

First—Let government and philanthropy unite in giving the race industrial train-

ing and stimulating them to industrial achievement. The whole field of skilled labor is open to them in the south, but unless they occupy it soon the opportunity will be gone.

Second—Let them be encouraged as much as possible to agriculture. I am inclined to believe that the negro is not far enough from nature to live in cities and towns. He is a child of nature and his home is in the country.

Third—The race should let alone political matters, leaving them to be settled by the whites, whose sense of justice and self-interest, as soon as the irritation of the past is allayed, will not only protect the negro in his rights, but will also invite him and assist him to larger development.

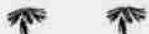
Fourth—The friendly relations so long existing between the negroes and the whites in the south should be restored. Between the new generations of each race there is little personal sympathy, helpfulness or affection. The result is that different standards of morality for the two races are established in almost every community. The two races have drifted away from one another, separated by the chasm of reconstruction, with its political and social nightmares.

The supreme need of the south to-day for both races, is industrial education, without which the whites are doomed to industrial inferiority and isolation, and the negroes to gradual decay and extinction, or to a permanent condition more degrading than slavery.

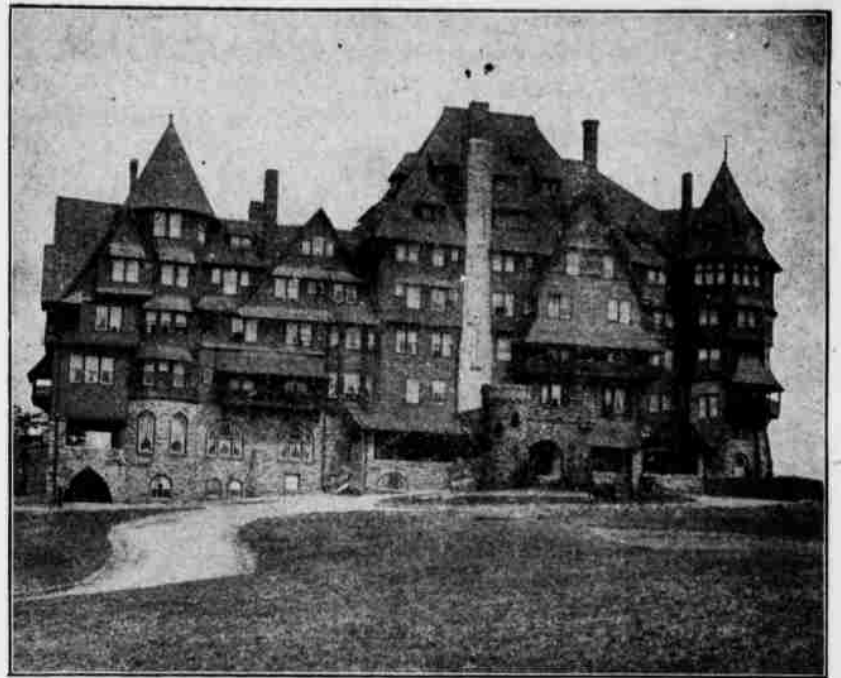


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