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Woodworth, C.L.

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THE NEGRO PROBLEM INSOLUBLE BY PRESENT METHODS.

SINCE the fetters dropped from the slave, in 1865, Northern beneficence has done its best, so far as its methods would allow, for the education and improvement of the colored people. But the work has not overtaken the want, and, on the lines pursued, it never can. And yet, since 1862, probably more than twenty millions of dollars have been contributed at the North for educational and religious work among the emancipated millions. This money, rightly handled, ought to have produced, in thirty years, a crop of training-schools ample enough to have furnished an abundance of teachers for the instruction of the sixteen hundred thousand colored children of school age, as well as a sufficiency of educated men and women to supply the leaders into the new conditions of the life opening before the people. If these children were gathered into schools averaging fifty pupils each, they would need, at the lowest estimate, thirty thousand teachers. And on the method we have in mind this number should have easily been brought forward within the thirty years. As a matter of fact, however, on the method pursued, we have hardly provided a tithe of that number. Let it be borne in mind that races are pushed upward from within, not from without, and hence the supreme want is, *first*, an adequate number of the right grade of schools, and *second*, a thousand graduates a year, fitted by culture and discipline and character for the part of leadership.

But after a generation of work, and this vast expenditure of money, we cannot show a single school, *broadly founded and endowed*, that stands for the education of the colored people. We have some missionary schools, supported by weekly box contributions from the churches and managed from missionary offices, but nothing solid, independent, and potential for all the needs of the

future. There is no excuse for pursuing this narrow, penny policy any longer. We have reached a point where a division of labor is the only wise thing to do. The South is able and willing to do her primary work. Last year she had 15,000 schools for the colored children, with an enrollment of 800,000 pupils, at an expenditure of over \$6,000,000. This year, according to the late Henry W. Grady, the South proposes to spend on all her schools some \$32,000,000, of which the colored people will have their full and equal share. This does not look as if the Northern people, through their missionary societies, were doing about all that is being done for the education of the colored race. So that the adding of a score or two of mission schools, and a few hundred Northern teachers, to the mighty army of Southern teachers, looks almost like an impertinence. But there *is* a part which the people of the North are fitted to act, and which they *ought* to act in this all-important business. It is within their power to shape the mental and moral life of the next generation of colored men and women, by shaping the mental and moral life of their teachers and leaders. See how it could be done. Suppose we had in hand, to-day, \$5,000,000 — one fourth of the amount already contributed by the Northern people for schools and churches among the freedmen — we will select ten Southern States, in which the colored people number from twenty-five to sixty per cent of the entire population. We will now select, in each State, the most central and eligible location, and we will proceed to found a broad training-school, equal to the education of a thousand picked students. We would put in a plant, in the way of dormitories, shops, presses, libraries, and laboratories, at a cost of \$200,000, and underneath the whole an endowment of \$300,000 more. The equipment is now complete, and the schools stand solid, independent, and enduring for all time. No matter what happens to the government, what changes, or disasters in business, what vagaries in philosophy or heresies in theology, the schools go on their way, shedding the light of learning and the blessings of religion upon the people. They are manned by learned and devoted faculties, and year by year send out their classes of ripe scholarship and of mature character to mold the life and the manners of the people.

Had this process been started twenty-five years ago, and were these ten institutions in as many different States now filled with the elect and eager youths of the race, would there be much un-

certainty as to the destiny of their people, or as to the coming teachers and preachers and men of affairs for the African populations? But by a different process we have spent at least quadruple this amount, and have but a meager show of marked and leading men in any of the walks of life, and hardly an educational institution, of *any name*, that could live a twelvemonth apart from the hand of charity.

This method may have answered for the infancy of the work, when a few charity schools were the measure of the public interest. But with the discovery that we have a race and a continent on our hands to be uplifted and saved, there comes the conviction that it is time to put away childish things, and to study for a broader method and an ampler foundation for the work. Sectarian or parochial schools are only less objectionable than *caste* schools. For a broad and even uplift of a race we want schools which spring out of the American spirit, and qualify for its life and duties. Our educational institutions must be solid enough and strong enough to project into these inert and barbarous masses the regenerating forces of a Christian civilization. They should cover every department of life with the freshest and most reliable scientific knowledge, and fit the people to enter upon this latest work of nation building with every advantage for avoiding the *mistakes*, as well as for profiting by the *successes*, of the past. The race *last* to be reduced into the order of Christian States ought to be *first* in the type and tone of its civilization.

To this end a few imperial, Christian schools, resting on unrestricted, independent foundations, and managed by their own boards of trust — as such schools always are — are indispensable. We have already a number of rudimentary schools, like Hampton, Fisk, Berea, Tuskegee, Straight, Talladega, and especially Atlanta University, that only need to be expanded to the measure of their capacity, by enlarged faculties and sufficient endowments, to answer all the calls at home, as well as of the Dark Continent, for the new light and the larger hope. For a work like this, charity schools and dime collections have had their day. Now for the great, massive schools, which only the united intelligence and wealth of the people can build and administer!

We would take, as our representative school, Atlanta University, both on account of its location, and on account of the ideal towards which it is working. Already possessed of a plant worth

fully two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, with an enrollment of some thirty teachers and more than six hundred students, it has in addition to its complete literary courses — covering a period of fifteen years — an industrial department of wood-working, metal-working, printing, turning, farming, stock-raising, etc.; and for its young women, instruction in cooking, laundrying, sewing, nursing the sick, and in whatever pertains to good housekeeping.

Judged by her potencies, as well as by her doings, Atlanta confidently makes her appeal to the tried and patient friends who have stood by her in hours of trial and need, to put at her disposal at least a quarter of a million of dollars as a foundation on which to work out the ideal school for the African race. Her trustees are intelligent and faithful men, and will see that money invested in Atlanta University goes farthest and accomplishes most. Great schools explain great nations. They have given civilization to Europe and America, and they will do it for Africa.

We bring this school to the good men and women of the land, and lay it upon their hearts as a trust from God, to cherish, protect, and endow. An endowment means permanency, power, and life for the coming generations. It means a light and a guide to the swarming myriads of the Dark Continent. It means a strong, learned, stable, and Christian faculty. It means thronging numbers of young men and women to this center of educational power, to be equipped for grand and gracious service. It means a quit-claim on many generous friends from perpetual and possibly annoying appeals in its behalf from year to year.

To that privileged and glorious company of elect men and women who administer their money as God's stewards, we commend the endowment of Atlanta University, and of all similar institutions working towards the redemption of races and continents. This is the true wisdom, the true economy, and the only true solution of the negro problem.

All remittances and communications relating to this subject should be addressed to

C. L. WOODWORTH,

Financial Agent of Atlanta University.

Box 93, WATERTOWN, MASS.