

tion, and the present race situation at the South is as it is because the North is not doing all in its power to better conditions.

The idea that the southern white people understand the Negro better than anybody else, and are better qualified to deal with the race question than the people of the rest of the country, must be dismissed as being false and erroneous when viewed in the light of conditions which obtain at the South. The fear of appearing to open the door of social equality between the races makes it impossible for the whites to get any practical knowledge of the home life of the better classes of the blacks. Without such knowledge there can be no substantial comprehension of the true inwardness of the situation as a basis for intelligent action. The servant class among the Negroes is well understood by the better elements in white society. But all Negroes do not belong to the servant class, and those who are not included in it—the progressive elements

of Negro population—must be dealt with as distinct and separate factors in the equation. It seems to me to be nearer the truth to state that the South has demonstrated, again and again, its inability to handle the question on any reasonable basis, and is therefore the least qualified to deal with the problem. The principal work will have to be done in the South, but by influences other than those which control in that section at the present time. They may, however, be brought about by the coöperation of southern agencies with forces from without.

The race problem is a live question and must be treated by live methods, and should, in my opinion, be submitted for investigation, consideration and report to a special commission of white and colored men of all parties and from both sections. This mode of treatment would have a tendency to remove the question from the realm of partisan politics to be settled in the forum of reason and fair play.

IV. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON AND HIS CRITICS

BY

IDA B. WELLS-BARNETT

CHAIRMAN OF THE ANTI-LYNCHING LEAGUE

INDUSTRIAL education for the Negro is Booker T. Washington's hobby. He believes that for the masses of the Negro race an elementary education of the brain and a continuation of the education of the hand is not only the best kind, but he knows it is the most popular with the white South. He knows also that the Negro is the butt of ridicule with the average white American, and that the aforesaid American enjoys nothing so much as a joke which portrays the Negro as illiterate and improvident; a petty thief or a happy-go-lucky inferior.

The average funny paragrapher knows no other class. Ignatius Donnelly, with all his good intentions in writing "Dr. Huguet," could make no other disposition of his hero than to have him change places with a Negro chicken thief. The

obvious moral was to portray a cultured white man's mental torture over the metamorphosis; and not, as the author intended, to show the mental, moral and physical anguish of the educated, Christian Negro gentleman, over the intolerable caste conditions which confront him at every step. There is no such type of Negro gentleman in Anglo-Saxon literature or art, and therefore the reader accepts, as a matter of course, the coarse swaggering Sam Johnsing of evil instinct, who is masquerading under the white skin of Dr. Huguet. That for white America is the typical Negro.

What Dr. Huguet did unintentionally Booker T. Washington has done deliberately. Yet he knows, as do all students of sociology, that the representatives which stand as the type for any race, are chosen

not from the worst but from the best specimens of that race; the achievements of the few rather than the poverty, vice and ignorance of the many, are the standards of any given race's ability. There is a Negro faculty at Tuskegee, some of whom came from the masses, yet have crossed lances with the best intellect of the dominant race at their best colleges. Mr. Washington knows intimately the ablest members of the race in all sections of the country and could bear testimony as to what they accomplished before the rage for industrial schools began. The Business League, of which he is founder and president, is composed of some men who were master tradesmen and business men before Tuskegee was born. He therefore knows better than any man before the public to-day that the prevailing idea of the typical Negro is false.

But some will say Mr. Washington represents the masses and seeks only to depict the life and needs of the black belt. There is a feeling that he does not do that when he will tell a cultured body of women like the Chicago Woman's Club the following story:

"Well, John, I am glad to see you are raising your own hogs."

"Yes, Mr. Washington, ebber sence you done tole us bout raisin our own hogs, we niggers round here hab resolved to quit stealing hogs and gwinter raise our own." The inference is that the Negroes of the black belt as a rule were hog thieves until the coming of Tuskegee.

There are those who resent this picture as false and misleading, in the name of the hundreds of Negroes who bought land, raised hogs and accumulated those millions of which they were defrauded by the Freedmen's Savings Bank, long before Booker Washington was out of school. The men and women of to-day who are what they are by grace of the honest toil on the part of such parents, in the black belt and out, and who are following in their footsteps, resent also the criticism of Mr. Washington on the sort of education they received and on those who gave it.

They cherish most tender memories of the northern teachers who endured ostracism, insult and martyrdom, to bring the spelling-book and Bible to educate those who had been slaves. They

know that the leaders of the race, including Mr. Washington himself, are the direct product of schools of the Freedmen's Aid Society, the American Missionary Association and other such agencies which gave the Negro his first and only opportunity to secure any kind of education which his intellect and ambition craved. Without these schools our case would have been more hopeless indeed than it is; with their aid the race has made more remarkable intellectual and material progress in forty years than any other race in history. They have given us thousands of teachers for our schools in the South, physicians to heal our ailments, druggists, lawyers and ministers.

They have given us 2,000 college graduates, over half of whom own property worth over \$1,000 per capita. The Negro owes a debt of gratitude which he can never repay to the hundreds of self-sacrificing teachers who gave their lives to the work of Negro education, to the end that they brought the light of knowledge, the strength of educated manhood and the example of Christian culture to those who would otherwise have been without.

That one of the most noted of their own race should join with the enemies to their highest progress in condemning the education they had received, has been to them a bitter pill. And so for a long while they keenly, though silently, resented the gibes against the college-bred youth which punctuate Mr. Washington's speeches. He proceeds to draw a moral therefrom for his entire race. The result is that the world which listens to him and which largely supports his educational institution, has almost unanimously decided that college education is a mistake for the Negro. They hail with acclaim the man who has made popular the unspoken thought of that part of the North which believes in the inherent inferiority of the Negro, and the always unspoken southern view to the same effect.

This gospel of work is no new one for the Negro. It is the South's old slavery practice in a new dress. It was the only education the South gave the Negro for two and a half centuries she had absolute control of his body and soul. The Negro knows that now, as then, the South is strongly opposed to his learning anything else but how to work.

No human agency can tell how many black diamonds lie buried in the black belt of the South, and the opportunities for discovering them become rarer every day as the schools for thorough training become more cramped and no more are being established. The presidents of Atlanta University and other such schools remain in the North the year round, using their personal influence to secure funds to keep these institutions running. Many are like the late Collis P. Huntington, who had given large amounts to Livingston College, Salisbury, North Carolina. Several years before his death he told the president of that institution that as he believed Booker Washington was educating Negroes in the only sensible way, henceforth his money for that purpose would go to Tuskegee. All the schools in the South have suffered as a consequence of this general attitude, and many of the oldest and best which have regarded themselves as fixtures now find it a struggle to maintain existence. As another result of this attitude of the philanthropic public, and this general acceptance of special educational standards for the Negro, Tuskegee is the only endowed institution for the Negro in the South.

Admitting for argument's sake that its system is the best, Tuskegee could not accommodate one-hundredth part of the Negro youth who need education. The Board of Education of New Orleans cut the curriculum in the public schools for Negro children down to the fifth grade, giving Mr. Washington's theory as an inspiration for so doing. Mr. Washington denied in a letter that he had ever advocated such a thing, but the main point is that this is the deduction the New Orleans school board made from his frequent statement that previous systems of education were a mistake and that the Negro should be taught to work. Governor Vardaman, of Mississippi, the other day in his inaugural address, after urging the legislature to abolish the Negro public school and substitute manual training therefor, concluded that address by saying that all other education was a curse to the Negro race.

This is the gospel Mr. Washington has preached for the past decade. The results from this teaching then would seem to be, first, a growing prejudice in northern in-

stitutions of learning against the admission of Negro students; second, a contracting of the number and influence of the schools of higher learning so judiciously scattered through all the southern states by the missionary associations, for the Negro's benefit; third, lack of a corresponding growth of industrial schools to take their places; and fourth, a cutting down of the curriculum for the Negro in the public schools of the large cities of the South, few of which ever have provided high schools for the race.

Mr. Washington's reply to his critics is that he does not oppose the higher education, and offers in proof of this statement his Negro faculty. But the critics observe that nowhere does he speak for it, and they can remember dozens of instances when he has condemned every system of education save that which teaches the Negro how to work. They feel that the educational opportunities of the masses, always limited enough, are being threatened by this retrogression. And it is this feeling which prompts the criticism. They are beginning to feel that if they longer keep silent, Negro educational advantages will be even more restricted in all directions.

Does some one ask a solution of the lynching evil? Mr. Washington says in substance: Give me money to educate the Negro and when he is taught how to work, he will not commit the crime for which lynching is done. Mr. Washington knows when he says this that lynching is not invoked to punish crime but color, and not even industrial education will change that.

Again he sets up the dogma that when the race becomes taxpayers, producers of something the white man wants, land-owners, business, etc., the Anglo-Saxon will forget all about color and respect that race's manhood. One of the leading southern papers said editorially, in discussing the separate street car law which was to go into effect last winter in Memphis, Tennessee, that it was not the servant or working class of Negroes, who know their places, with whom the white people objected to riding, but the educated, property-owning Negro who thought himself the white man's equal.

There are many who can never be made to feel that it was a mistake thirty years ago to give the unlettered freedmen the

franchise, their only weapon of defense, any more than it is a mistake to have fire for cooking and heating purposes in the home, because ignorant or careless servants sometimes burn themselves. The thinking Negro knows it is still less a mistake to-day when the race has had thirty years of training for citizenship. It is indeed a bitter pill to feel that much of the unanimity with which the nation to-day agrees to Negro disfranchisement comes from the general acceptance of Mr. Washington's theories.

Does this mean that the Negro objects to industrial education? By no means. It simply means that he knows by sad experience that industrial education will not stand him in place of political, civil and intellectual liberty, and he objects to being deprived of fundamental rights of American citizenship to the end that one school for industrial training shall flourish. To him it seems like selling a race's birthright for a mess of pottage.

They believe it is possible for Mr. Washington to make Tuskegee all it should become without sacrificing or ad-

vocating the sacrifice of race manhood to do it. They know he has the ear of the American nation as no other Negro of our day has, and he is therefore molding public sentiment and securing funds for his educational theories as no other can. They know that the white South has labored ever since reconstruction to establish and maintain throughout the country a color line in politics, in civil rights and in education, and they feel that with Mr. Washington's aid the South has largely succeeded in her aim.

The demand from this class of Negroes is growing that if Mr. Washington can not use his great abilities and influence to speak in defense of and demand for the rights withheld when discussing the Negro question, for fear of injury to his school by those who are intolerant of Negro manhood, then he should be just as unwilling to injure his race for the benefit of his school. They demand that he refrain from assuming to solve a problem which is too big to be settled within the narrow confines of a single system of education.

V. THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

BY

W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

AUTHOR OF "THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK"

THE points upon which American Negroes differ as to their course of action are the following: First, The scope of education; second, the necessity of the right of suffrage; third, the importance of civil rights; fourth, the conciliation of the South; fifth, the future of the race in this country.

The older opinion as built up under the leadership of our great dead, Payne, Crummell, Forten and Douglas, was that the broadest field of education should be opened to black children; that no free citizen of a republic could exist in peace and prosperity without the ballot; that self-respect and proper development of character can only take place under a system of equal civil rights; that every effort should be made to live in peace and

harmony with all men, but that even for this great boon no people must willingly or passively surrender their essential rights of manhood; that in future the Negro is destined to become an American citizen with full political and civil rights, and that he must never rest contented until he has achieved this.

Since the death of the leaders of the past there have come mighty changes in the nation. The gospel of money has risen triumphant in church and state and university. The great question which Americans ask to-day is, "What is he worth?" or "What is it worth?" The ideals of human rights are obscured, and the nation has begun to swagger about the world in its useless battleships looking for helpless peoples whom it can force to buy