



# The Negro Question



AN ESSAY

BY

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## I.

Perhaps the most important and most difficult task which confronts the United States is the solution of the question: **What relation shall the nine millions black population occupy towards the eighty millions white population?**

In the following I shall endeavor to put into view the question from every standpoint, as impartially as this is possible, for entirely so this cannot be done. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, as well for the individual as for a nation, and where the interests of others come into conflict with the same these foreign interests must not be allowed consideration as long as we are not guilty of direct injustice. At which exact point the duty to recognize the rights of the much smaller negro population meets the necessarily to be protected interest of the by far more numerous white population is a matter of individual opinion.

In the year 1620 the first Africans were imported into North America and sold as slaves at Jamestown, Va.; and little did the inhabitants of this continent foresee the grave consequences of this action. They welcomed this addition to their working power, especially the landowners, and before all those of the Southern colonies, most of whom were unaccustomed to hard labor and climatic conditions; for the tilling of the soil and the harvesting of cotton, rice, sugar and tobacco, etc., was not only hard work, but partly also unhealthy. Very soon a lively trade in these human cargoes developed and one shipload after the other was imported under the flags of all seafaring nations. By far the most cargoes, however, were landed from vessels belonging to the Northern colonies, and later on, under the Stars and Stripes, from those of the New England States, whose religious citizens gloried even in the idea that they introduced these poor, benighted black Africans to christendom and civilization.

Through immigration from Europe the white laborers very much increased in the North, so that there the enslaved negro became gradually of less importance. Therefore, the Northerner found it soon more profitable to sell his slaves to the South at good prices, and as he—excepting the trade in slaves—lost by and by the inter-

est in the upholding of the institution of slavery, he could afford to indulge in the sentimental recommendation of the abolishment of the same, which, however, was also justified by the later views on this question of the civilized world in general. It must not, however, be lost sight of that the inhabitants of the North were at least equally responsible for the existence of slavery as those of the South.

It cannot be denied that the legal status of the negro as slave was not much better than that of the dumb animal. He could be sold like it; families could be separated; the owner had the right of punishment and the law afforded him only little protection. Manifold were cases of cruelty; this cannot be denied, but many also were the cases of very pretty relationship between the families of the owners and especially the house slaves. The exaggerated stories of cruelties committed by the Southern slaveowners in the treatment of their slaves had mostly their origin in the brains of fanatical abolitionists of the North, few of which had ever seen the South with their own eyes. It must be remembered—even granted that there exists a certain difference between the Northerner and the inhabitants of the South, conditioned by different interests, climate and surroundings—that both were branches of the same tree and one did not surpass the other in intellect; for the cradle of many of the most celebrated men of this nation has stood in the region of the slave States. Even in these latter the idea gained more and more ground that slavery—condemned by the entire civilized outside world—was a wrong, and many are the examples that single favored slaves, or, at the death of an owner all his slaves, were given their freedom; but still, all in all, the institution suited the Southern man, spoiled by the warm climate and opulent and comfortable living without much exertion. And so it could not be otherwise than that the evil of slavery could only be extirpated from the outside and by force. That in doing this the exact letter of the law was not always observed could not be avoided. This cannot be done in great changes and the evolution in the history of nations. Whatever may stand in the way of progress must be put out of the way. If possible by legal means—otherwise by the force of the stronger.

## II.

Since the earliest known history Africa has been inhabited largely by a negro population. Crude, wild, cruel and indolent, as they were in those days, they have remained up to the present time. Notwithstanding the fertile soil of their home country—with exception of the desert—with many hidden treasures of gold, diamonds, etc.; notwithstanding their navigable streams, which reach far into the interior, and notwithstanding the extensive seacoast, with its many good harbors, through these many thousand years this black race did not show the least sign of self-development neither in the field of agriculture, of commerce and navigation, nor of literature and art. Lazy by nature, they made war for the purpose of robbing and enslaving enigmical tribes; or they followed the chase and fishing in order to procure the necessaries for their miserable lives. They were possessed of a kind of barbaric religion, which is still existent among the negroes of the Bahama Islands (especially on Haiti); and in the United States it is here and there represented under the name of "voodooism." The little they acquired in the length of time, such as trading in goods, the handling of firearms, the use of sails in their long, narrow canoes instead of oars, they received from outside through their intercourse with other races. Development from out themselves is not existent, so that it may well be said that this black race of Africa was not open to culture—nor **is now**. A further evidence of the truth of this assertion is that even when the negro has stood for some length of time under the influence of the white race, has learned its ways and doings, has—imitatingly—acquired to a small degree its religion, yes, civilization (not made them his own); that even after that—left to himself again—the negro will not only come to a standstill in these acquirements, but he relapses into his original indolence, brutality and superstition. Haiti, St. Domingo, Liberia are vivid examples.

The negro, imported during the two centuries and a half from Africa into the United States previous to the civil war, soon got accustomed to the dependence of the will of their new masters. Had they not seen already worse slavery? For on the black continent, where the different tribes were constantly at war with each other, all

able-bodied prisoners were made slaves; and certainly the treatment of these was not as good as that given them in North America. The descendants did not know any better but that they were born to serve their white masters. Slavery was no hardship for them. Quietly passed the life of the slave of the South. After the—to be sure hard—work of the day and a good meal (many of the white population did not fare so well after the civil war) they enjoyed banjo-playing, song and dance in front of their quarters. Trouble was unknown to them, and thoughtlessly they lived from day to day like children. They possessed a certain musical talent, which, however, did not lift itself above the “*niccau*” of the ordinary, and when the young misses had visitors and wanted to dance, Uncle Ned was called upon to play his fiddle. By the daily intercourse with whites and by strict discipline the original crudity and brutality was much improved on, and often the negroes showed even sentiment. Actually touching was the love of the old black mammy for her growing “*miss*,” as she called her white mistress even yet when she had a family of her own, or the faithfulness of the negro growing up with his young master and his readiness to sacrifice himself for him. Not enough can it be acknowledged that during the entire time of the civil war in those parts not occupied by the Federal armies, from where every able-bodied white man had been sent to the front, leaving behind old men, children and women, not a single case can be called that the latter had been molested by the negroes, also left behind; thousands of cases, however, where these negroes took care of the weak to the best of their ability.

The African slave trade had long been prohibited. The inhibition, however, dating as early as 1808, was not at all carried out, and the trade continued secretly. For the Northern States it was a profitable one, and the South could well use the increased labor for its uncultivated soil. So the transgression was winked at. It was well known and a common occurrence that in all Northern ports, as far south as Norfolk, vessels were sent with a full cargo of products of the United States to Brazil; there a sham sale of the vessel was made to send it to the African coast, to bring from there a cargo of slaves to the United States under foreign flag and apparently foreign ownership. As late as 1858, under Buchanan’s presidency, the “*Wanderer*” landed over four hundred slaves in South Carolina. The profits, of course, wandered into the pockets of the

Northern shipowners, who, however, also met with heavy losses occasionally through capture of their vessels by the British navy patrolling the coast of Africa.

For a long time public opinion leaned strongly towards the idea that slavery should be abolished, as being in opposition to the spirit of the times; and it is very significant that the first move to accomplish this did not come from the philanthropic North. It was Massachusetts which succeeded to keep out of the constitution a clause for the suppression of slavery, advocated by Jefferson. Oftentimes voices had been heard in the Southern States in opposition of slavery, but they were objected to in the North; and when, in 1825, a small party—represented by a newspaper—was formed in the Southern State of Tennessee, going in for abolition, there was hardly an abolitionist to be found in the State of Massachusetts.

Gradually these voices for abolition of the shameful institution became louder, however. The community of Friends had been in favor of it for a long time, and a great number of negroes had been assisted by them—to be sure, illegally—in their flight to the free States; but only in the year 1856 the abolitionist party showed itself for the first time as such nationally. Its headquarters were at Rochester, N. Y., under the leadership of Lloyd Garrison. It consisted of well-meaning men and women, who worked indefatigably, to whom afterwards the protectionists were added, who joined the popular movement for their own selfish purposes. A well-formulated idea how their object should be gained was not then in existence.

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## III.

In November, 1860, the presidential candidate of the Republican party was elected. It was the first victory of this party, and with it begins the last act in the history of slavery in North America, which finally ended with the abolition of this institution, which so long had been eminently troublesome. This latter had been the firm intention of the abolitionists, to which party Lincoln belonged; but they were not clear in their own minds how it should be brought about, and few foresaw the way it was done later on. In his first inaugural address, on March 4, 1861, Lincoln lays particular stress upon it that the Constitution must be upheld, and spoke the celebrated words: "*No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered upon claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.*" And further on he says: "*I have no purpose directly or indirectly to interfere with the institution of slavery in the State where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.*" His plan was to have slavery abrogated by an act of Congress, with compensation to the slave owners and colonization of the negro in foreign lands. Not a very practical plan; for, firstly, the Southern States could not very well do without the black labor, secondly it would have been rather difficult to carry the plan through Congress without rupture, and finally, how many years would it have taken to transport four million people by vessel to a foreign country?

As it turned out, it should be done in an entirely different way.

The slave States—with very few exceptions—announced their secession from the federal union; the civil war, one of the bloodiest in history, began, and in quick succession one event pressed upon the other.

On December 3, 1861, in his message to Congress, Lincoln recommends to declare all slaves coming into the federal lines free under the confiscation act, the colonization of same and acquisition of territory for their emigration.

March 6, 1862, he recommends a joint resolution: "*That the*

*United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State, in its discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system."*

On April 16, 1862, slavery is abolished in the District of Columbia.

On July 14, 1862, he recommends again to Congress to pass an act to pay a certain amount per head for the liberation of slaves in any State which lawfully abolishes slavery.

On July 17, 1862, he returns to Congress the passed "*Act to suppress insurrection, punish treason, etc.*," which was to liberate all slaves. He points out that this could not be done under the Constitution; but if the slaves were first all declared confiscated then Congress had the right to set them free, and that he would have no scruple to sign an act to that effect.

His proclamation of 22d September, 1862, sounds, however, a little different: "*I hereby proclaim and declare—That on the 1st day of January, A. D. 1863, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward and forever be free, etc., etc.*" And on the last-named date he publishes his celebrated emancipation proclamation. It must not be forgotten that the President, as well as Congress, always tried to adopt no measure outside of the Constitution, and used the following sophism: Congress has no power by itself to abolish slavery; but it has the right to confiscate the property of rebels, whereby it becomes the property of the United States, which now Congress can dispose of as it sees proper. Many people even now think that Lincoln's emancipation proclamation abolished slavery entirely in all parts of the United States. This was, however, not the case, for the few so-called "*loyal*" slave States (loyal by necessity) were not included. But in reality slavery was done away with, for in these loyal States, strongly occupied by federal soldiers, all the slaves at once left their owners, and little would it have availed the latter to reclaim them.

In his message of 1st December, 1862, Lincoln still says: "*Among the friends of the Union there is great diversity of sentiment and of policy in regard to slavery and the African race amongst us. Some would perpetuate slavery; some would abolish it suddenly and without compensation; some would abolish it gradually and with com-*

*compensation; some would remove the freed people from us and some would retain them with us; and there are yet other minor diversities.*" He was in favor of the third proposition.

In 1863 colored persons were organized into the war service, and in his message of December 6, 1864—after his re-election to the presidency—Lincoln recommends to Congress to enact a law for the emancipation of **all** the slaves in **all** the States; this time without mentioning anything about colonization, compensation or gradual abolition.

By the surrender of Lee to Grant at Appomattax Court House in April, 1865, the cruel civil war, which had been waged for four years, death-dealing and devastating, was virtually brought to an end. Shortly before his ever-to-be-regretted death Lincoln had prepared a proclamation in which he reinstated North Carolina (although he calls it "*conquered province*") into its place among the States of the Union without withholding from the erstwhile rebels the voting franchise. The leaders of the Republican party proved to him, however, that the Constitution did not allow him to make any disposition in regard to the voting franchise in any of the separate States. In the pretty hot controversy, in which the leaders tried to persuade him to all kinds of coercive measures against the "*conquered provinces*," Lincoln answered them finally in the following words, which history will ever remember: "*Whatever I may have sanctioned against the exact wording of the Constitution in the stress of war as commander-in-chief of the army to save the Union, I have no right to do now that the Union is saved. My first duty is to re-establish the Constitution as our supreme law over every inch of our soil.*"

By such words he made for himself enemies of many of his old political friends and advisers, such as Stevens, Sumner, etc., a few days before his death. They wished to continue the war against the Southern States, but felt that the realization of their pet ideas would be difficult, if not impossible, under Lincoln's administration. His death—the greatest calamity for the South—should give them, however, the desired satisfaction.

With the inauguration of Andrew Johnson as President a hot conflict commenced between him and Congress in regard to the reconstruction of the "*conquered*" States and about the negro question. Again and again Johnson sent to Congress his veto against

acts passed by that body liberating all negro slaves in all the States without giving the States, lately in rebellion, representation in Congress. But on the 18th of December, 1865, the act was passed over his veto with the required two-thirds vote, and it was afterwards sanctioned by the several States. Therewith slavery in the United States had come to an end.

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## IV.

The Republican party had now accomplished all they wished for at the first election of Lincoln to the presidency. The abolitionists had effected the abolition of slavery and the protectionists had raised the rates of import duty to an enormous height. Its mission seemed to be ended. But political power has its great attraction; the political leaders looked for ways and means to perpetuate the same. The tendency of a reconstruction on the basis of the Constitution and the forgiving for and the forgetting of the rebellion, which showed itself with many of the unionists and—be it said to their glory—in the army, which so bravely had fought for the Union, did not please them; and in the hearts of men like Thaddeus Stevens, Sumner, Edmunds, Conklin, etc., a great antagonism—yes, hatred—had formed against the rebels. The conquered Southern States should be entirely subjugated and kept down, they opined, so that they never again should be able to raise their heads; and as the best means to accomplish this recommended itself to them to take away the voting franchise from all who had in any shape or form participated in the rebellion and bestow it upon the negro population.

An act, passed by Congress, that "*all persons, born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are declared to be citizens of the United States*" was sent back to Congress by Johnson with his veto on the 27th of March, 1866. This law would have placed the stamp of citizenship upon every negro. Johnson reasoned that as eleven States—the very ones most affected by the passage of the act in question—were not represented in Congress, the Constitution would not admit of the passage of such act; and he says further in his veto message: "*Four millions of them (the colored population) have just emerged from slavery into freedom. Can it be reasonably supposed that they possess the requisite qualifications to entitle them to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States? Have the people of the several States expressed such a conviction?*" He also took the stand that, according to the opinion of the federal government, the rebel States had never been—constructively—outside of the concert of

the United States; if the latter idea was taken for granted, the right of coercion and war would not have existed; and that now—after the rebellion had been quelled—an amendment to the Constitution could not be passed by Congress without the representation in the same of the States, now excluded, by a two-third majority and the required sanction of three-fourths of all the States.

On January 5th, 1867, Johnson vetoes an act passed by Congress for the enfranchisement of the colored population of the District of Columbia. He says: "*Great danger is to be apprehended from an untimely extension of the elective franchise to any new class in our country, especially when the large majority of that class, in wielding the power thus placed in their hands, cannot be expected correctly to apprehend the duties and responsibilities which pertain to suffrage.*" And "*To give the ballot indiscriminately to a new class, wholly unprepared by previous habits and opportunities to perform the trust which it demands, is to degrade it, and finally to destroy its power, for it may be safely assumed that no political proof is better established than that such indiscriminate and all-embracing extension of popular suffrage must end at last in its destruction.*"

In his message of 31 December, 1867, Johnson says: "*The blacks in the South are entitled to be well and humanely governed and to have the protection of just laws for all their rights of person and property. If it were practicable at this time to give them a government exclusively their own, under which they might manage their own affairs in their own way, it would become a grave question whether we ought to do so or whether common humanity would not require us to save them from themselves. But under the circumstances this is only a speculative point. It is not proposed merely that they shall govern themselves, but that they shall rule the white race, make and administer State laws, elect presidents and members of Congress, and shape to a greater or less extent the future destiny of the whole country. Would such a trust and power be safe in such hands?*" and "*No independent government of any form has ever been successful in their hands. On the contrary, wherever they have been left to their own devices they have shown a constant tendency to relapse into barbarism,*" and further, "*The great difference between the two races in physical, mental and moral characteristics will prevent any amalgamation or fusion of them together in one homogeneous mass. If the inferior obtains the ascendancy over*

*the other it will govern with reference only to its own interests—for it will recognize no common interest—and create such tyranny as this continent has never yet witnessed. Already the negroes are influenced by promises of confiscation and plunder” (it had been promised to them that every negro should receive forty acres of confiscated land, to which the government would add a mule). “They are taught to regard as an enemy any white man who has any respect for the rights of his own race. If this continues it must become worse and worse, until all order will be subverted, all industry cease and the fertile fields of the South grow up into a wilderness. Of all the dangers which our nation has yet encountered none are equal to those which must result from the success of the effort now making to Africanize the half of our country.”*

But all the warnings of the President were of no avail. The resp. laws were passed over his vetoes, and thus the negro received the elective franchise in all the United States.

The closing of this long and hot conflict between Congress and the President was that Andrew Johnson was impeached for high crimes and misdemeanor in office. The accusation, however, was voted down in the Senate, with nineteen votes “not guilty” and thirty-five votes “guilty.” Only one vote turned the scale (two-thirds of the votes of all Senators present being required for a finding), that of Senator Ross, of Kansas, whom all Stevens’ persuasions and threats could not bring to vote against his conscience.

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## V.

Only too soon should the prophecies of Johnson be realized. Public federal officers, sent to the South by the government, and Northern adventurers, who sought opportunities to enrich themselves in the "*conquered provinces*," inundated the country: they were joined by a—not very large—number of the white not-landowning class, in the days of slavery called by the negroes **white trash**. Now the former received the name of **carpet-baggers**, the latter that of **scalawags**. These unscrupulous persons fell upon their victims like wolves and sucked the country dry in a most shameful manner. They did not do this directly, but through the agency of the negro—just liberated and enfranchised—and with the help of the government at Washington, which was only too ready to listen to their reports on the condition in the South and did everything to assist them in the final subjugation of the white Southern population and the prevention of the latter to exercise their rights as citizens. It was the shameful reconstruction period.

In all possible manner the negroes were incited to actions against their former masters. They were told that they were in every respect their equals—yes, that they were even their betters; that the property of the white would have to go to the liberated slaves and that their former taskmasters would by and by have to do the work for them—the blacks—and till their fields. That it was their duty to oppose and renounce the proud bearing of the white men as well as women towards them, and—if they choose—to possess themselves even of the latter. It was Satan pouring into the ears of the easily listening negroes his temptation, and not without results. In the elections, in which only few white citizens could take part on account of their participation in the rebellion, men of the class of the above-named carpet-baggers and scalawags were chosen for the higher public offices; the new elected legislatures consisted to the greater part of negroes. And now commenced for them a gay life. A negro militia was instituted, arms and uniforms were furnished from the arsenals of the general government, and a comical, if sad, spectacle it was when these black troops received their instructions in military tactics from their black commanders. Large State loans

were authorized by the black legislators and the money lavishly squandered, the white friends of the negro looking well to their own pockets. Enormous taxes were levied, which did not hit the negro, which took, however, from the impoverished white landowner his last penny. His farms and plantations had to be sold in public sale for taxes which he could not pay, and they were eagerly bought up and at low prices by the Northern hyenas. The tilling of the acres was neglected, as the farmer could not know whether he could still gather in the harvest. The attacks of the negro upon the white women increased from day to day, a thing unknown heretofore. Only the often promised and by the negro continually demanded forty acres and a mule would not materialize.

Such condition could not be tolerated for a long time; it was tyranny in its worst guise. Total annihilation would have been preferable. Secret societies were formed throughout the Southern States, all under one head, which punished and revenged misdeeds of the negroes with great determination and alacrity, and which thereby spread among the easily intimidated blacks such fear and awe that they commenced to desist from their evil purposes. These secret societies and also the gradually awakening sense of justice among the better class of the Republicans brought about by and by a little more tolerable conditions. But only the year 1877 gave the South its rights under the now altered Constitution. Up to that time elections were still under the supervision and influence of the United States military and federal sheriffs in many parts of the South.

The vote of the negro played, however, still an important part at the elections, especially in such districts where he outnumbered the white population. The negro voted always only for his own interest or what he considered to be such. Either for the Republican party, from which he expected in return the appointment to public offices and which—he thought—would protect him against the ever-present ghost of the reintroduction of slavery, or also for anybody who would offer him a dollar for his vote. With full conviction of the right and with the intention and wish for the general welfare the negro voted never.

The white Southerner suffered much under the feeling of wrong done him, which made **him** bear the entire burden of the fifteenth amendment, and, as he could not look to Washington for betterment

of his condition, he finally helped himself by embodying into the several State constitutions an election law with qualification for the elective franchise as to education and amount of taxes paid. He did this on the ground of the federal Constitution, which gives to each State the right to determine for itself who shall be entitled to a vote. These new election laws are not uniform in all the States, but similar, and answer the desired purpose, for, although they take into their scope the white as well as the black, and therefore seem to be impartial, they are intended for the latter and hit him almost only. The endeavors to upset these laws as being unconstitutional were of no avail, the United States Supreme Court deciding them to be legal.

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## VI.

In the foregoing I have given the history of the negro race on the North American continent from the date of its first importation as slaves up to the present day. In the following I shall try to explain my views as to the relation he **should** occupy to the white race in the future.

Benevolent assimilation has become a byword through one of our Presidents, but in its application—as used by McKinley—is certainly out of place, as will be admitted. If in war one nation conquers another, conditions of both and their intellect and education, their moral and physical character being about equal and if originally they belonged to the same race, then you may use the expression, and good results have been attained when the conquered land had thus been taken possession of by the victors, who freely mixed with the old inhabitants. The best example perhaps is England, where in consequence of repeated conquests a mixture was produced of Picts, Scots, Saxons, Celts, Danes and Normans and a new race has been formed, which in regard to physique, intellect and moral character is second to none in the world. Nearly the same may be said of Germany, where by the mixture of many—not always teutonic—tribes a strong and intelligent nation has been the result. A peaceful assimilation has been going on in the United States, where by a mixture of the blood of all the European peoples a nation has arisen, strong of body and fine to look at, brave, industrious, inventive, talented, highly gifted mentally and of noble heart. Such assimilation I would call benevolent, for the different parts make up a whole better than the single component parts before their assimilation. It is not to be overlooked that in all the foregoing named examples **all** the component parts belonged originally to one and the same race, the Indoeuropean. With **one** exception, to touch upon which this is not the proper place. It requires a separate essay.

How is it, however, with the negro race? For thousands of years the negro has dwelt in his African home in barbarism, without showing the least sign of evolution. A savage he came to this country

with all his traits of cruelty, lust, heathenish superstition, indolence and ignorance: as far behind the inhabitants of this continent in civilization as the light of the firefly is behind that of the sun. For two hundred and fifty years—it is true under the yoke of slavery—and forty years as a free man he has been in close touch with the white man, saw his working and doing, his family life, adopted after a certain manner his religion; but in all these many years was his progress in culture and civilization only very little and superficial. He became somewhat tamer and patiently he submitted to the yoke, which did not press very heavy on his shoulders, for he did not know any other side of life. The thirsting desire after liberty was unknown to him. And when finally he received his liberty, not gained by his own endeavors, but forced upon him by the discord among his former white masters, how did he use it? His old faults and sins reappeared. Laziness, drunkenness, coarseness, thieving and sensuality became his marks, and our jails and penitentiaries and the police court records are sad witnesses of the degeneracy of the colored race. Forty-three years of liberty have not improved him in the least; yes, it is to be questioned if they have not had an influence in the opposite direction. In political regard through the elective franchise he has become the means to defeat the welfare of the country as it is considered by the majority of the white population, for at the elections the negro is the tool of the best-paying party or the one which will make him the most advantageous promise. In no branch of human occupation has he risen above the niveau of mediocrity. He is a good tiller of the soil and a good common laborer (when he works), a middling mechanic—more cobbler than shoemaker; he does well with horses, is a good fireman, but a poor locomotive engineer, etc., etc. Nowhere has he made his mark as architect, civil engineer, in literature or science or in art, unless you will compare Ira Aldridge to Edwin Booth, Blind Tom to Paderewski or the Black Patti to her celebrated white namesake. I am speaking in general as of one race against the other. There are many good men among the colored population, those which we may justly esteem. I only wish to demonstrate that the negro race is by far not equal to the white one in culture and civilization, but is greatly its inferior.

An intimate social relationship of whites to the blacks is impossible without degeneration of the former. All ethnologists and

psychologists agree on this.\* The dark color of skin, the peculiar penetrant odor, the wild, unsteady eye, and the ugly formation of features of the negro are distasteful, if not nauseous, to the white, which no length of time can diminish. He feels the negro is not "*one of us*," and cannot occupy an equal social position alongside of him. The existence of mulattos, quadroons and octoroons is not very flattering to the morals of the white male population—especially of the South—but they are not the result of miscegenation by marriage, which only occurs rarely in the Northern and Western States, where the intermarriage of blacks and whites is not prohibited by law. The colored descendants of white fathers are the very proofs that even in this way no good results are reached. They retain the bad traces of their black forefathers and show them only in a more cunning way. Learned authorities say that physically they are going back. But, taking it for granted even that the colored race should be improved and made more open to culture and civilization by amalgamation with the white race, shall the latter lower itself by acting the party of breeder for a mixture of races with the result of a lower standard than that represented by it before? No, never! Every nation has its hands full enough to keep itself above water in the contest of the peoples for the highest degree of culture as that it should place such a millstone around its neck. It is not to be thought of that the white race will ever enter into intimate relationship to the race which stands so far below it and to which it personally has a strong aversion. It will never

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\*) Disraeli in Comingsley: "*Any race, which recklessly permits the mixture of its blood with that of other races, must perish.*"

Houston Stewart Chamberlain, professor at Vienna, says in his great work **The Foundation of the XIX Century**: Professor August Forel, the well known psychologist, has made interesting studies in the United States and in the West India Islands about the victory, which races, intellectually inferior, have gained over superior ones by means of their greater generative power. If the brain of the negro is weaker than that of the white man, the power of propagation is greater and the preponderance of his qualities with the progeny so much more predominant than that of the white. More and more therefore does the white race keep aloof from them, not only in sexual, but in all respects, because it has at last recognized, that **mixture means destruction**. Forel shows by many examples, how impossible it is for the negro to assimilate our civilization more than skin deep and how everywhere, as soon as left to himself, he retrogrades to primitive African barbarism. One, who has been trained to phrases about the equality of all humanity, will shudder when he learns how it lacks in reality in any state, where the negro governs. And Forel, who as naturalist has been educated to the dogma of one, everywhere equal humanity, comes to the conclusion: "*For their own good the blacks must be treated as such as they are, an altogether inferior human race, incapable of culture in themselves.*"

occur in the United States of America, the maudlin sentimentality which exists in the heads of some persons, notwithstanding.\*

Lincoln, the liberator of the slaves, speaks repeatedly on this point before and after his election to the presidency. So, for instance, *"I am opposed to assimilation of the two races into social and political equality, and am horrified at the idea of a mulatto citizenship, which I consider too dear a price even for emancipation. I believe that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which will forever forbid their living together on terms of political and social equality. If such should be attempted, one must go to the wall."* And in his reply to Douglas in September, 1858, he says: *"I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people. I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races to live together on terms of social and political equality; and, inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of the inferior and the superior, and I am, as much as any other man, in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."*

The election laws, as they now prevail in the Southern States, exclude from the polls most of the negro population. But they do not reach fully the purpose sought, inasmuch as they do not entirely deprive the same of the elective franchise; also it is to be expected that in time more and more will qualify as voters by passing the required examination. The laws are a makeshift and not based on honesty and truth. Apparently they shall exclude ignorance from the ballot box; in reality they are intended to exclude the black race. Under the circumstances the means to gain the desired object may be excusable, but they are not worthy of the nation and also would not answer the purpose for the length of time.

After enjoying the voting franchise for about forty years the negro has proved himself to be unworthy of the same. The hatred of Northern fanatics, existing at the time when this franchise was granted, has almost entirely disappeared and has given way to better

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\* In speaking of Fred. Douglas many years ago I myself have heard the intellectual and learned Miss Assing, niece of Varnhagen van Ense and close friend of Lloyd Garrison, say: *O, what privilege it would be, to be the wife of such a man.*

judgment. Criminality amongst the negroes, and especially their indecent and felonious assaults on white women, have increased generally, but particularly also in the former so-called free States and have changed there the opinion of the inhabitants about the colored race. More and more the white population of the North, South, East and West have formed themselves into one homogeneous whole on this question.

It is not impossible that the United States Supreme Court—if the case should be presented to it—would declare the fifteenth amendment unconstitutional, arguing that the same had been passed over the veto of the President, while eleven States of the Union were excluded from debate and vote in Congress, and that these eleven States were also not considered for the sanctioning of the amendment by three-fourths of the States. But, if nothing can be done in this way, then—in my opinion—the only and proper solution of the question would be a repeal of the amendment by act of Congress, for of **all the dangers which our nation has yet encountered none can be compared with that of placing the negro on political and social equality with the white race.**

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I have shown that those men who insisted upon and brought about at a great national sacrifice the abolition of slavery—and foremost among them the illustrious Abraham Lincoln—did never advocate the equality of the two races, neither socially nor politically, an idea which prevails in the minds of very many persons. And it has been my endeavor to point out the danger to our race in allowing to one so entirely different and inferior to our own privileges which will tend by and by to obliterate the social line, which still is drawn between the two and which would bring about an assimilation deteriorating the character of the Indo-european and in a closer degree the Germanic race (in a broader sense) by which the Republic has been founded. There are other similar dangers from other races, of which to speak is not here the place.



## KOMMENTAR zu Eberhard Hayne's Essay 'The Negro Question'

Dr Ulrike M Vieten Queen's University Belfast

Ein 'Ex-Oldenburger in Baltimore', das verspricht auf der einen Seite, eine *ungewöhnlichere* Biographie (er lebte auch 2 Jahr in Mexiko): das Leben eines erfolgreichen Emigranten, das Leben von Einem, der in den Süden der USA ausgewandert war. Auf der anderen Seite - und das werde ich in diesem Kurzkomentar hervorheben - verbreitet Hayne eine recht *gewöhnliche* rassistische Haltung gegenüber schwarzen Menschen. 'Gewöhnlich' (und nicht gewöhnungs-bedürftig) im Sinne der Mehrheitsmeinung im 19. Jahrhundert; nicht nur in Europa sondern eben auch besonders, in den Südstaaten der US. Hayne schreibt vor dem Hintergrund des Endes des *American Civil War* (1861-1865) – Die Nordstaaten hatten gegen die Südstaaten gekämpft und gewonnen, die letzteren wollten die Sklaverei aufrechterhalten. Hayne identifiziert sich mit der Position der Südstaaten und spannt in seinem Pamphlet den Vorurteilsbogen von der zivilisatorischen Rückständigkeit Afrika's und seiner schwarzen Bevölkerung, über die Verharmlosung der Sklavenarbeit bis zu der Frage der Legitimität des Wahlrechts für Schwarze, *Suffrage*. In einer ähnlichen Weise wie Frauen infantilisiert wurden so spricht Hayne den schwarzen US Amerikaner\*nnen die Reife ab, am politischen Gemeinwesen demokratisch teilnehmen zu können. Rhetorisch zitiert er an mehreren Stellen Abraham Lincoln, der für die Befreiung der Sklaven steht, aber eben auch *privat* rassistische Positionen formuliert haben soll.<sup>1</sup> Hayne bezieht sich auf eine Konversation Lincoln's mit dem schwarzen Intellektuellen, Fredrick Douglas (1818-1885), der als Sozialreformer, Sklavereigegner und Führer der Afrikanisch-Amerikanischen Bürgerrechtsbewegung, international bekannt wurde. Andere schwarze Reformer\*nnen – Zeitgenoss\*nnen von Hayne- waren z. B. Maria W. Stewart und Alexander Crummell, die bleiben ungenannt. Es erstaunt nicht, dass Hayne in zwei Sätzen auch anti-Semitische Anspielungen macht (Letzter Satz, S. 21; und auf S. 18) und sein Argument der angeborenen Minderwertigkeit schwarzer Menschen mit der These untermauert, dass schwarze Männer weisse Frauen angreifen (S. 16), und die 9 Millionen (gegen 80 Millionen) das halbe Land afrikanisieren wollen. (S. 14) Zum Teil rassistische Positionen, die auch heute wieder Verbreitung finden.

Fazit: Rassistische Haltungen dominieren den Text. Uns Menschen des 21. Jahrhundert zeigt es auch, wie nachhaltig weisse Ignoranz gegenüber schwarzen Menschen ist.

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<sup>1</sup> Seite 21, "I am opposed to assimilation of the two races into social and political equality and am horrified at the idea of a mulatto citizenship, which I consider too dear a price even for emancipation. I believe that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which will forever forbid their living together on terms of political and social equality."

Ich lehne die Assimilation der beiden Rassen hin zu sozialer und politischer Gleichstellung ab und bin entsetzt über die Vorstellung einer Staatsbürgerschaft für Mulatten, die ich selbst für einen zu hohen Preis für die Emanzipation halte. Ich glaube, dass es einen physischen Unterschied zwischen der weißen und der schwarzen Rasse gibt, der ein Zusammenleben in politischer und sozialer Gleichstellung für immer unmöglich machen wird.

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