

toward the other has been persistently misrepresented by cliques of demagogues for purposes as base as themselves. Now before we harshly blame the South for these results, we ought to look carefully into the causes of the Rebellion.

In respect to these, we are apt to be led into an error. We often regard the Rebellion as a mere conspiracy of a base oligarchy. That it was fomented to a great extent by a clique of demagogues, who made use of the discords then prevailing to further their ambitious ends, we do not attempt to deny. But to suppose that the real cause lay no deeper than in the schemes of such men is an absurdity. The Lost Cause on the contrary, had no trivial origin. Would the half-fed, half-clothed and unpaid legions of the Confederacy have toiled manfully on through four years of terrible fighting? Would the South have suffered all the desolating effects of war? Would all this have happened simply because of an idea? Despite the conduct of Davis and his associates, we cannot believe this.

Now an imposter, when prosperous, may have great success, but when adversity comes, he is found wanting. So it is with people, and the South, had it believed its cause an imposture, would not have been so persistent or so self-denying. The principles for which it rose in arms were firmly believed in by the greater mass of the Southern whites of all grades and conditions. We may consider them misled, but we cannot justly accuse them of insincerity. The world has been prone to regard revolution as a virtue if successful, but as a crime if suppressed. We must go back to the very colonization of our country if we would find the causes of the War for Independence; in like manner, we must go back to the beginning of our national existence if we would find the causes of the late Rebellion.

The causes of our civil war are to be sought for in the antagonism between the democratic North and the aristocratic

South. This antagonism lay in their social condition. Now in the North, social equality prevailed from the very beginning; but the South was aristocratic from the outset. It recognized several grades of free whites, and there were, at first, indented white servants as well as negro slaves. The planters stood at the head of the list. They were men of wealth, culture and influence, and owned large estates tilled by gangs of slaves. They boasted of a long line of ancestry, and in their hands they held the political control of the whole South. Below them were other classes of whites by whom the trades and professions were filled. The last of these were the poor whites. This class were lazy, shiftless and improvident, yet such a condition was not wholly their own fault. Southern aristocracy demanded the abasement of one class that another might have an undue prominence. The poor whites were degraded from the outset and were kept so; not tyrannically, perhaps, yet none the less firmly.

The last class were the negro slaves. Now an aristocracy implies the relation of master and servant; in other words, that servitude of some sort must exist, so that the leading class may possess high social position, ease and luxury. The American will never submit to being enslaved himself, and the poor white scents the idea no less than the Yankee. So the planter, though he despised the negro, nevertheless employed him. In a warm climate, the negro is better adapted for work than the white man; therefore, slavery grew in the South and was defended.

Cotton, it has been truly said, was a social tyrant, whether it was ever king or not. The planters were a well educated class. Among them have appeared some of the most brilliant men of our country. But here, the bright part of the picture ended. The poor white did not care for education, and the negro was denied it. The planters controlled everything, because their education and social advantages gave them an immense influence