

THE NEGRO AGAIN

Minnesota Correspondent Has a Word to Say in Reply to Mr. De Hart

Editor Independent: In a recent Independent was an article written by one Jno. S. De Hart of Jersey City, N. J., on the race question or negro equality. Slavery in this country was sectional and was the bone of contention for many years. The Missouri compromise and the John Brown raid were the chief causes of bringing on the war of the rebellion. After four years of bloodshed, deprivation and high taxes, peace was restored. The negro was free. The army was disbanded and the war veterans returned to their homes each to follow his peaceful pursuits.

Now, after the lapse of 40 years and the experience of a bloody, cruel war, we in the north and south are still haunted and perplexed with this race question. We had slavery ever since the formation of this government until the time of the emancipation proclamation. The children of Israel served in Egypt 400 years, and yet I never heard of them having the right of franchise, but they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years in order to make themselves fit subjects for the promised land.

Only a few years after the war of the rebellion there was an amendment to the constitution of the United States, articles 13, 14 and 15, making the negro a full-fledged citizen of the United States. Article 15 put him in the ballot box along with his white brothers. Some say the negro of the south is as capable of voting as many of the poor whites. In a sense this may be true. But why add more ignorance to the ballot box? Had the negro not been the dupe and tool of the republican party, he would not have been granted the right of franchise at that time.

Mr. De Hart says in 1876 there was a question as to who was elected president, Hayes or Tilden. Mr. De Hart says nobody was elected by the people. Several years after this presidential election, Hayes and Tilden, a vote on this question was taken in the house of representatives at Washington and by a large majority vote Hayes was voted a usurper and was recorded on the journal of the house. He says a commission was created. Yes, a commission 7x8—seven democrats and eight republicans. What a righteous act! Louisiana and one of the other southern states were declared for Hayes, that never went republican.

Mr. De Hart says the democrats can govern the southern states in their own peculiar way all the time. But they cannot govern the northern states. As black as the democrats have been painted by many of the chief apostles of the republican party, they never openly, in broad daylight, in the face of the priesthood, and an open Bible, stole a president of the United States. If they think this a worthy heritage to leave their children, we say, Amen.

Mr. De Hart says there is something in democratic civilization that does not find favor in the north; it is the treatment of the negro and the tariff question. He also says if the democratic party should come into power again, would set the whole north against it. I would like to ask Mr. De Hart if he was ever ten miles north of Mason and Dixon's line? He lives down in the little state of New Jersey where they manufacture trusts from \$20,000 to \$80,000 a piece. By their shifty business they can afford (and do) pay their state officers more salary than we pay our state officers in the great state of Minnesota.

As to the negro up north, he has all the rights and privileges he is entitled to, and sometimes a good deal more.

Then Mr. De Hart mentions the tariff and says the democrats want tariff for revenue only. This cry about high protection, claiming it was for the benefit of the laboring man is a lie from the mouth out, and any man who can keep himself outside of an insane asylum should know better. It is wholly for the rich manufacturer to make money. There has been more trouble with the laboring class under the McKinley and Dingley tariff law than ever before. Thousands of poor men have been made to believe that high protection was for their benefit and nothing else. Poor, foolish men; they need pity.

Mr. De Hart seems to think more of a black skin than any other. For my part, I prefer my own color and the race to which I belong. The negro has his freedom and he should be given a chance to get a living; but when you talk about social equality among the two races it can never be, either south nor north.

Our president knew the feeling in the south in regard to the negro question and should not have appointed

those negroes to any federal office. It only helped to make a bad matter worse.

My friend says Blanche K. Bruce, once, a member of the United States senate from Mississippi, was the peer of any white man in it. His taste may be good, but I do not admire his judgment. He says the public schools must be kept open to them. Education is the cure of all evils. Wonder where my friend found that old proverb? Education is a good thing when rightly applied, but is of little use to people who have no practical knowledge or common horse sense, and the majority of the negroes are deficient in both these. Their former condition, being in servitude, partially made them so; and they are partly so by nature. It will take several generations for them to make much of an improvement on themselves.

We think the best way to get along with the negro is to let him alone as much as possible. In many respects he seems to be unfortunate.

J. H. M.

(Race problems are always grave and should not be approached in too dogmatic a manner. The negro problem in the United States is certainly serious enough, and will give us plenty to do to solve it in the years to come, without adding to our perplexities by having also a Filipino problem even more perplexing. The Independent does not desire to devote too much space to this negro discussion, believing that the real problem is humanity without regard to nativity or color. But it gives space to the article above and the ones following, and trusts that the incident may close. Mr. De Hart seems to have aroused the ire of several gentlemen—but his heart will be found to be in the right place, even if his views of the negro question are attacked.—Associate Editor.)

Editor Independent: Northern people, ignorant of existing conditions at the south, are puzzled to account for the apparent hostility to the negro race, and though peculiar sensitiveness of the people, whenever the subject is touched upon by a northern sectional partisan press, and the politicians, whose subsistence and political power depend upon keeping the public mind (north) inflamed against the south.

I am an ex-confederate soldier—a South Carolinian—from a state whose sons have ennobled business, social professional and political life—and whose patriotism has never been questioned. In the struggle for a separate independent government we failed—"accepted the situation," and went to work rebuilding our fortunes. We regard our four years' heroic struggle with pride, and leave the record to our children, as a precious heritage.

The negro, for four years, stayed at home, upon the farm, and faithfully worked to support our women and children during our absence at "the front." There was a bond existing between master and mistress and the slaves, which, through generations, had become strong and tender. We had many instances among us of cruelty, but these exceptions were almost always foreigners or Yankeeized southerners. I was a participant in the memorable battle at Hilton Head and Bay Point, S. C., November 7, 1861, when the union fleet forced a passage through to Beaufort. There were many transports with the vessels of war, containing soldiers, munitions of war, civilian tourists, artists, etc., as well also a heterogeneous company of so-called educators, whose mission was to teach the young negro mind and heart all things necessary to become a "Bostonese."

Their miscegenation theories produced their fruits. The older white denizens of that section of country know that many of those moral physicians first experimented upon themselves—to demonstrate the beauties of "benevolent assimilation." The confederate soldier, upon his return a physical wreck and in rags, received a loving welcome from his former slaves, and together they started to build anew. But, during the eight years of reconstruction the seeds of variance and strife were industriously sown by the buzzard element of the north, from governors (God save the mark!) down to the "school-marm"—whose absence from their native wilds was hailed by their respective communities as God's special blessing.

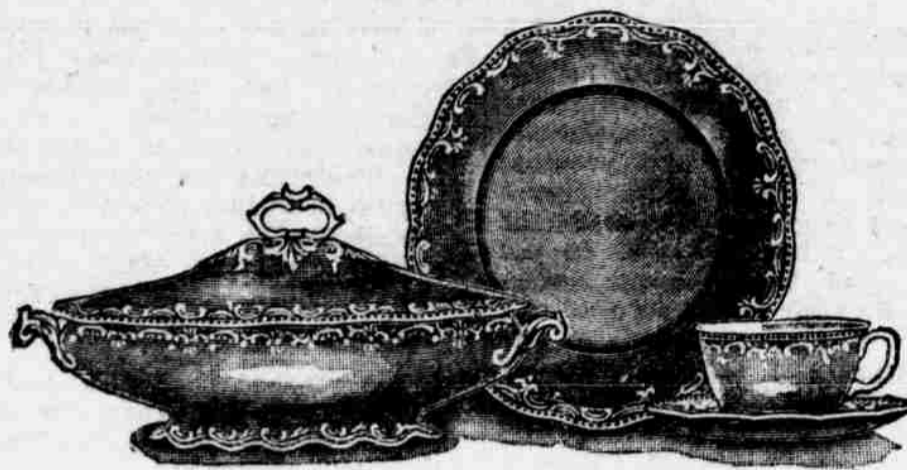
Everything that the white man aspired to be among his people was open to the negro to become among his people. The lynchings that have occurred since reconstruction were from among the "new issue" of negroes, grown up since the war, who, instead of listening to and following the advice of sensible leaders like Booker T. Washington (in our opinion a better man than Roosevelt), Bishop Turner and a host of others who are try-

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ing to uplift the race, prefer to be led by the teaching of Henry Ward Beecher (he of the spotless fame), Harriet Beecher Stowe, John Brown (whose soul is still "marching on" through Plutonian shades), Roosevelt and De Hart, et al.

Let the negro problem at the south alone! The southern white man is the negro's best and only friend, and he, assisted by the good men and women of the negro race, will solve the problem to the lasting benefit of both races. When we of the south discover that the republican party and their president are anxious to see the lucrative, honorable government positions at the north filled by the negroes, then we will reverse our opinion of them.

I am a democrat (not a "still" one) and believe in the truths which you and other populist papers are preaching. Cheerfully bidding you "God-speed" in your labors for a government of, for, through, and by the people. I hereby extend my hand to Mr. Alex H. Vance of Milford, Neb., for his manly presentation in answer to Mr. De Hart's vicious article. I beg to thank him in the name of our people.
E. J. BENTON,
Once "High Private" in Co. G, 11th Reg't S. C. Vols., Hagard's Brigade, Hoke's Division, Longstreet's Corps, C. S. Army of Northern Virginia. Macon, Ga.

Editor Independent: If ever there was a time when the best effort for the cause of the wage-earner should be made, it is now. When I think of the faithful who have stood for the principles of right, since the green-back party was formed at Toledo, O., and all along the line till now, and have stood for the right of the laboring class, and with the education that they have received from the few men that own the coal fields, they will see that the public utilities belong to the people and will so vote to secure them and place them in the hands of the people where our fathers placed them.

I have read with a great deal of interest the pros and cons in The Independent in regard to the negro question. First, they were not to blame for being here; they were born here; consequently, are acclimated to their climate. Now, the question is, what we shall do with them? There are those that would like to see them amalgamated with our white families; but they are a distinct race from us and should let them go by themselves.

Now, when the Indian was in the way, we transplanted him to a terri-

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tory of his own. Why not be as liberal with the colored man? We have territory enough. The educated colored man could then exercise his capacity in bringing his race to a higher civilization. Of course, many of them will remain as laborers in the several states, but to those who have no homes it would be a blessing and it would dispose of the vexed question.
S. G. SHEFFER,
So. Haven, Mich.

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