MR. RICHARD GRANT WHITE VS. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OF THE UNITED STATES.

A SOUTH-SIDE VIEW.

BY B. C. LOVEJOY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

"I thank God there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years. For learning has brought heresy and disobedience into the world, and printing has divulged them and libels against the best government." — Sir Wm. Berkley, Governor of Virginia, 1669.

"To say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than seeing man by a light. And it is without all controversy, that learning doth make the minds of men gentle, generous, manageable, and plant to government, whereas ignorance doth make them churlish, thwarting, and mutinous." — Bacon, Advancement of Learning. Objections to Politicians.

"Knowledge will not lift the masses except as a balloon is lifted, because it is inflated with gas." — Richard Grant White, December, 1880, North American Review.

"The rights of nations and kings sink into questions of grammar, if grammarians discuss them." — Dr. Samuel Johnson.

In the minds of some, the temple sanctifies the prayer, and the respectability of a review confers character upon its contributors. This explains a possibly dangerous tendency of Mr. Richard Grant White’s article in the December number of the “North American,” on the “Public School Failure.”

A writer who enjoys or assumes an infallibility on one subject is too apt to be regarded as an authority on all subjects. Mr. White seems to recognize this fact, and therefore does not trouble himself or readers with many statistics or much argument; and the several printed pages may be condensed into one paragraph: “I, Richard Grant White, proclaim the public-school system to be a failure; you, the readers of the ‘North American Review,’ who have not thought upon the subject at all, or who have thought upon it vaguely, may regard this assertion as savoring of temerity and folly, but the result of the system has been deplorable and threatens to be disastrous.”

Are there large classes of American citizens who have not thought upon this subject at all? That some cultured individuals have thought upon it vaguely is apparent from this article; that its author is one of these is apparent from his argument.

Are the public schools to be suppressed under the philological decree of Mr. White, as the monasteries were suppressed under the royal mandate of Henry VIII., and for the same reason,—that they are a great evil? No, because large masses of American
citizens have not only thought upon the benefits of the system, — they have enjoyed those benefits themselves in the past; they see their children and their country enjoying those benefits now. Their limited education confining their philological vision to the generalities of language, they have gazed upon Mr. White sporting among particles as upon a whale sporting among minnows. They have regarded him as the wet-nurse of their vernacular, the oracle of his specialty; have accepted his conclusions as final in every war of words. But when he turns his pen against their common schools, as the Knight of La Mancha turned his lance against the windmills, peasant-like they will rise in defence of what they know from experience is useful and necessary. They will appeal from the ipse dixit of a philologist to the statistics and logic of political economists; and from the opinion of a writer to the action of thirty-nine States and nine Territories of their own country, to the cumulative testimony of foreign nations, and to the recent progress of one people based upon free ports and free schools.

Individuals, no doubt, have special gifts which distinguish them from the many, and on their specialties speak as men having authority; but when great numbers occupy their minds upon a particular subject, the voice of a large majority carries conviction: for men ask themselves, How can so many practical men and philosophers be wrong and Mr. White be right? so that it is probable that those "who have not thought at all upon this subject will regard this assertion that the result of the public-school system has been deplorable and threatens to be disastrous, as savoring of temerity and folly."

So much for the popular effect of this article; now for its intrinsic merit.

The contribution may be considered under three heads: The Abusive, the Argumentative, the Historical and Statistical.

The writer regales the reader with the sweeping assertion that the public-school system is worse than a failure,—that it is the fountainhead of whatever social evils repress American progress and disgrace American civilization. Among these social evils referable to this system are bribery, corruption, immodest maidens, idle youth, roving tramps, divorces, dishonesty. Mr. White states that these evils have grown pari passu with the system, and argues that they are therefore the logical consequent of the system.

The most insignificant facts furnish him with the basis of the most overwhelming conclusions. In 1842, a charitable society, having the common-school educational interests of New York City in hand, was
absorbed in the State system: which event he characterizes as “a calamity not only to the city of New York, but to the State; not only to the State, but to the country.” The disappearance of the society, the appearance of the system, were, according to this writer, the origin of progressive idleness, immorality, and crime, culminating in the persons and peculations of Tweed and his followers.

Can the extravagance of assertion go further than this? Is it to be acquiesced in for no other reason than that it is dignified by the name of Richard Grant White? Without statistics, are we to admit that we have been going down hill for a half-century? Are the wicked among us confined to those classes who have been through the public schools, from primary to high? Are the graduates of the Harvards and Vassars the only honorable men and virtuous women? Are the ignorant who never crossed the threshold of a public school not to enter into the social problem? Did not the parochial schools, the charitable system Mr. White commends, contribute some of the elements to Tweed’s surroundings? If our present condition is so lamentable as to furnish a luxurious banquet to the pessimist, had a great civil war, with its demoralizing influences, no hand in this our utter and almost hopeless degradation, for which there is no remedy but the suppression of public schools?

The fact is, Mr. White had no statistics upon which to base his conclusion, and like Mahomet, proclaims his creed and inspiration with one voice.

Let us imagine a future disciple of this gentleman postdating future social evils to the present time. He will say: “In the year 1878, according to the report of the Bureau of Education, the school population of the United States was, in round numbers, 14,000,000; about 5,000,000 were in daily attendance, about 9,000,000 were out of schools and in the streets. The tramps, the idle youth, the immodest maidens, the faithless wives, the dishonest men, who now disgrace and degrade us, were of the 5,000,000 in attendance upon the public schools in 1878.” “But,” asks some one, “what has become of the 9,000,000 who were growing up in ignorance all this time?” “Oh,” is the reply, “I am a Whitite: our social science ignores ignorance and attributes crime to intelligence.” This proposition suggests a brief consideration of the moral and metaphysical discussion contained in this article, of the relation between ignorance and vice, which have not, according to Mr. White, any absolute relation in the masses.

Probably the most comprehensive idea can be conveyed, to those who have not read the article, of the writer’s reasoning on this sub-
ject, by quoting his definition of vice, and applying to it a practical touchstone.

"Vice," he says, "is the satisfaction of personal wants without regard to right."

A burglar breaks into your house because he wants your plate. His efforts are crowned with the happiest termination for him, the saddest for you; your losses supply his wants, which are satisfied without regard to right. But the vice that begins with wants and ends with satisfaction must cease upon the successful purloining of the plate. The burglar, however, who wants your neighbor's silver-ware, and makes an unsuccessful attempt to get it, experiences no change of heart, because there has been no change of property; your neighbor remains in possession of his forks and spoons, the burglar remains in an original state of sin, for his wants are not satisfied either with or without regard to right.

Among other startling propositions advanced by this gentleman is that "the belief that such knowledge as can be got in schools and from books is elevating and purifying is general, but only plausible." * But with praiseworthy inconsistency he does subsequently admit that generally "education has an intrinsic value as a formative social agency." †

Yet he argues, with superadded inconsistency, that "knowledge will not lift the masses except as a balloon is lifted, because it is inflated with gas."

As a statistician, Mr. White seems to have confined his investigations to the pages of the late report of Mr. Walton, agent of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and to the tables of the Census Report of 1860.

From the exhibit of the school status of a single county, Mr. White infers a similar condition throughout the whole country. Some of the facts which Mr. Walton presents are discreditable to the methods of the system in that county; but it does not appear, in the glaring instances of ignorance and incompetency which that gentleman supplies his readers with, how long the pupils had been in attendance, and what was their natural capacity. Many of the facts furnished by Mr. Walton are very encouraging; none of them antagonize the system per se, — they only supply arguments for better supervision and the employment of more capable teachers. The general conclusions of Mr. Walton respecting the public-school system are not the same that Mr. White reaches from the same premises.

The second authority upon which Mr. White bases his conclusions is the Census Report of 1860.

He says: "Moreover, there is evidence on record, evidence furnished quite independently of any investigation of this subject, which proves the case against the public-school system as clearly and undeniably as the truth of Newton's theory of gravitation," etc. "For the census returns show that crime, immorality, and insanity are greater in proportion to population in those communities which have been long under the influence of the public-school system, than they are in those which have been without it." A comparison is next made between the New England States and the six Southern States, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

This triumphant vindication of Mr. White's position, on the part of Mr. White, suggests two prudent propositions, prefatory to that sublime faith which he has in the "Public School Failure" as a failure: —

First. Are the statistics of the census of 1860, on crime, immorality, and insanity, reliable?

Second. Does the civilization of New England pale before the civilization of these Southern States?

The Act of 1850, by virtue of which the census of 1860 was taken, was so defective that a more efficient execution of its provisions than it received would not have furnished reliable statistics. In the preface to the compendium of 1870, Gen. Francis Walker, superintendent of the census, deprecates the difficulties incident to the defective statute of 1850, and on pp. 531 et al. explains the inconsistencies presented by the tables of 1870, referable to imperfect prefatory legislation. He illustrates this statement by pointing to the errors in the comparative exhibits of Massachusetts and Connecticut, on the question of pauperism, and assures the reader that the returns respecting the element of crime are even less trustworthy. And of his own tables, those of 1870, he says: "In the opinion of the superintendent of the census, no use of these figures for the purpose of comparison between States and sections is justifiable, unless reference is had to the remarks beneath the table"; and in the census report proper of 1870, p. 566, he says: "It was the want of uniformity of construction, in connection with manifest looseness in the collection of material, which yielded such impossible and altogether irrational results." It will be seen, therefore, that results characterized by General Walker as "impossible and altogether irrational" are compared to the truth of Newton's theory of gravitation, by Mr. White, indorsed as conclusive by Mr.
White, and depended upon by Mr. White for a full and satisfactory vindication of his extravagant assertion that the public-school system is a failure.

Both the census of 1860 and 1870 were embarrassed by the defective provisions of the Act of 1850. The census of 1860 was not prepared under the eye of the distinguished statistician whose notes warn us against jumping to erroneous conclusions, nor was the darkness of its guesses illuminated by his explanations.

Upon a comparatively worthless collection of figures, Mr. White bases conclusions general without exception and positive without doubt. But the reader will hardly hesitate in deciding between the philologist and the statistician, if for no other reason than that to the specialist there is due more faith than to the amateur.

In an age of facts, conviction waits upon statistics. If the latter are imperfect, the lover of truth will stay until better are obtained before indulging in any comprehensive assertions.

The laws governing in social science are not derived from single instances or narrow views of things. The statistician, it is true, contracts as well as dilates his vision, taking in particulars as well as generals, giving to each element its proportionate weight, just as a chemist does in the combination of his elements, producing a result partaking of the nature of all yet differing from any.

Mr. White is not such a statistician. In assailing the public-school system as it now exists, in a developing stage, over a vast area and among an increased population, from a historical point twenty years back, antedating a civil war, and confining his geographical view to a comparatively small segment, he cannot, he could not with acceptable census tables, reach the positive conclusion he has arrived at.

Besides, in making his comparison between the two parts of two sections,—for New England is not the North, nor these six Southern States the South,—he has ignored many essential features.

He takes no note of slavery in the South; but statisticians, without holding the Southern people individually responsible for the institution, would regard every slave as the representative of a crime on the part of the owner, of ignorance, theft, adultery, and superstition on the part of the slave.

He takes no note of the possible and probable crimes committed in a slave population, where both record and punishment were for the most part confined to the plantation, the master passing sentence and the overseer executing it.

He ignores the general unperfectedness of social statistics at the
South, and does not give sufficient weight to public sentiment respecting the just grounds of self-defence and the use of lethal weapons in that section; also that the Southern people, being agricultural, were not subject to the same foreign influences, nor, on account of mildness of climate and fertility of soil, acquainted with the same desperate conditions, which, in cold and sterile regions, are the temptations of poverty to crime.

Turning from the imperfect tables of the census of 1860, which according to Mr. White show the public-school system at the North to have been a much greater social evil than slavery at the South, let us appeal to those facts which are derived from every man's observation.

Admitting the proposition of Mr. White that every social feature of the two sections is inseparably connected with the presence or absence of the public-school system, how do the two civilizations compare with each other? Which section has furnished the greatest number of inventors, skilful artisans, ship-builders, railroad-builders, book-writers, book-publishers, book-readers, artists, sculptors, musicians, and last but not least, philologers? Which section has thrown the best safeguards around municipal life, health, and happiness by wise sanitary measures, that meet contagion at the outer gates and isolate it? Which section has established the greatest number of universities, colleges, art schools, art galleries, technical schools, and all other institutions for the dissemination of useful and refining knowledge?

The civilization of the South was tripartite, corresponding to the supremacy of its aristocracy, subordination of its poor whites, degradation of its slaves. The traveller who enjoyed the hospitality of a Southern gentleman would have left charmed with the refinement, culture, and attractiveness of Southern civilization, if in going and coming he had not passed through fields peppered and salted with woolly heads and cotton-pods, or observed the impassable gulf between the rich land and slave owner, and the possessor of an acre, who roused himself from indolence sufficiently to tickle a responsive soil with his ploughshare, and there gazed with lazy eyes upon nature working for one who regarded labor as the badge of slavery.

The comparison offered presents two pictures: the ante-bellum civilization of the South, tending to the preservation of slavery and of class supremacy; its post-bellum civilization, adopting New England's methods, and substituting the public-school teacher with book in hand for the overseer with whip in hand. Nothing but the bigotry of sectionalism would deny the existence of many attractive elements.
in the culture and character of what was known as the aristocracy of
the South, but their charm was confined to the circle it adorned.
This exclusive class of ante-bellum times had an English tone: its li-
terature was English, and doubtless many of its provincialisms were
English. Sir Roger de Coverleys and Sir Charles Grandisons were
to be met with in the South as late as 1860. The members of this
aristocracy were all equals, the rest of Southern mankind inferiors.
This social sentiment of equality by right of birth insured self-respect,
and with it pride, courage, and truthfulness in social life. But in
comparing Southern civilization of the drawing-room with Southern
civilization of the outside world's workshop, one who was charmed
with the former under the chandelier would exclaim, when he received
his hat and coat from the servant in the hall, "With all its fascinations,
cui bono?" On account of its exclusiveness, its confined sympathies,
because it extended no helping hand to humble merit, and had no
charity for frailty that was not hereditary, it has been for years dying
out. The draughts of an inferior posterity have almost exhausted the
virtue and fame of an illustrious ancestry. The logic of events is
reducing the class to the mass, whereas education generally diffused
would have lifted the latter to a higher plane, and brought both into
a mutually beneficial contact.

The reader who desires to investigate the question of the relation
of ignorance to crime and pauperism, will find two interesting papers
upon this subject in the report of the Bureau of Education for the
year 1872, from the pen of Edward D. Mansfield, LL. D., which not
only indicate careful research, but are commended by the imprima-
tur of Gen. Eaton. The foreign statistics are derived from the
report of Dr. E. C. Wines, United States Commissioner to organize
the International Prison Congress in 1871, and they show that "the
proportion of criminals totally ignorant varies in the different coun-
tries of Europe from 35 to 95 per cent, and that ignorance among
criminals is the rule, and education the exception."

And in referring to the United States the writer presents this
exhibit:—

"The totally ignorant convicts, as shown by those having no
education, are 22 per cent. The totally ignorant convicts and very
ignorant, 25 per cent. The very deficient, including these and
a large share of those who can read and write, 50 per cent.
These proportions are, in regard to the ignorant, much below those
of Europe; and they ought to be, for it is beyond all doubt that,
except the negroes of the South, the mass of the people of the United
States are much better educated than in Europe. This is especially,
the case in New England, New York, and the central States of the Northwest. But in either case the general fact is shown, beyond doubt or controversy, that ignorance is one great cause of crime, and that in elevating the education of society, both religious and intellectual, we advance the interests of society by diminishing crime. Just so far, therefore, as society neglects to educate people, just so far does it prepare the crime which the criminal commits."

And the writer continues, respecting his results, as follows: —

"Taking the returns of the census of 1870, in connection with the above tables (i.e., those contained in his paper and too extensive to be inserted in this article), it appears that in the Middle States the proportion of illiterate criminals is eightfold the proportion of illiterate people; in the central West, thirteenfold; in the West and Pacific States it is tenfold. In the South it is only threefold; but this is caused by the great mass of colored people, who make up a large mass of the whole people, and being nine tenths of them wholly ignorant, furnish the great mass of criminals."

Dr. Mansfield's two final and general conclusions are, —

"First. That one third of all criminals are totally uneducated, and four fifths are practically uneducated.

"Second. That the proportion of criminals from the illiterate classes is at least tenfold as great as the proportion from those having some education."

In conclusion, why does and why should the State establish and sustain a public-school system?

*Salus populi suprema lex* is the first and essential maxim of society and government. By virtue of its wisdom and authority, taxes or troops are levied, private property destroyed to prevent a conflagration, or the lives of citizens offered upon the shrine of unification. This maxim also steps in between a reluctant individual and a petitioning people, and enforces a sacrifice of selfishness to the general good, and applies public revenues to the establishment of public schools. There is and always has been a scale in national strength, wealth, and happiness. The degrees upon this scale have been noted by philosophical observation, which has established the diffusion of knowledge among the masses as the testimony and test of comparative condition.

In the proportion that education has been general the average prosperity of a people has increased, its power, resources, patriotism, and national individuality have developed. This was the faith upon which Prussia acted in memory of Auerstädt and Jena, and in anticipation of Sedan; it has been the creed of France since "all was lost save honor."
But the uninstructed cannot educate their own children, and the benevolence of the few cannot supply the wants of the many; hence State and municipal authorities, deeming public education a public good, a public necessity, established public schools.

But educated teachers are as essential to schools as educated officers are to armies. This was experienced, and normal schools were established.

The mission of the system being the education of the masses, the question is, Has it contributed encouragingly to its object?

That the masses of the North and West have received from the public schools whatever education has been furnished them within the last half-century, no one will deny.

That the country has been a progressive one, no one but Mr. White, perhaps, will deny. Slavery has been abolished; the shock of a great civil war has been successfully sustained; a great debt has been incidentally incurred, but with it the public credit of the nation has been established on a firmer basis than it ever enjoyed, and the deepest monetary depression has been experienced, without the whisper of repudiation in any Northern or Western State. In the mean time, we have rivalled other peoples in their manufacturing specialties, we have been multiplying inventions, cultivating art and literature, and producing everything that moderation wants, asks for, and uses. Skilful husbandry is supplying Europe with native products, and honesty and industry are indorsing national securities until they are in demand upon every foreign change. Who are the bone and sinew of the people who make this exhibit? Are they the masses educated at public schools, the comparatively few educated at colleges and universities, or the fewer educated at parochial schools, or the great number uneducated?

Finally, as to the plaintive protest on the part of Mr. Richard Grant White against one man paying taxes to educate another man's children:

When a tax-payer contributes to the establishment of a public school system, he knows that unless the system is a good one, his money is wasted, with loss to himself and without advantage to others; therefore he sees to it that good teachers are obtained and good methods adopted. This accomplished and its advantages apparent, he chooses, as he has a right, to see that his own children shall enjoy these advantages. So it rests with every tax-payer who has children to get more than the worth of his money directly, besides receiving those same indirect benefits which the childless tax-payer receives.

The philosophical principle of taxing all for public education is
clearly stated by John Stuart Mill, in his chapter on the "Limits of Government." He says:

"Education is one of those things which it is admissible on principle that a government should provide for the people. There are certain primary elements and means of knowledge which it is in the highest degree desirable that all human beings should acquire during childhood. If their parents, or those upon whom they depend, have the power of obtaining for them instruction and fail to do it, they commit a double breach of duty: towards the children themselves, and towards the members of the community generally, who are all liable to suffer seriously from the consequences of ignorance and want of education in their fellow-citizens. It is therefore an allowable exercise of the powers of government to impose on parents the legal obligation of giving elementary instruction to children. This, however, cannot be done without taking measures to insure that such instruction shall always be accessible to them either gratuitously or at a trifling expense."

This leads to the consideration of the class to be educated, and the degree of education. The tax-payer certainly has a right to send his children to the public schools, if any one has a right, and the recognition of this right precludes the idea advanced by Mr. White, to reduce them to charity or pauper institutions; and if they should ever assume this character their usefulness, except to the degraded, would be destroyed. The system, to be beneficial, must enlist the sympathies of the middle classes, which it will accomplish only when it becomes identified with their hopes and ambition. Its development to-day is due to the fact that it is the cherished institution of the average American, his lever of social elevation, — not in a drawing-room sense, but in that of self-respect based upon knowledge.

Here and there, the friends of the system find occasion for dissatisfaction and disappointment, and with the frankness of Mr. Walton, expose errors and suggest remedies; but do not credit the system, as Mr. Richard Grant White does, with the frequency of divorces, (!) and refer any other alleged widespread social evils to the bad spelling and bad reading of Norfolk County children. Perfection is nowhere claimed for the system. Its general usefulness is known by general, not local experience; its general improvement is going on, although Norfolk County may make a fossiliferous exhibit.

That it affords the cheapest possible education for the tax-payers' children no one will deny who is acquainted with the facts. Mr. J. Ormond Wilson, superintendent of the public schools of the District
of Columbia, furnishes the following table of comparative costs of educating pupils. It will be found in the last report of the school board of the District, and is based upon the reliable statistics collected by Gen. Eaton, superintendent of the Bureau of Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES</th>
<th>Tuition</th>
<th>Incidental Expenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Boston</td>
<td>$24.83</td>
<td>$9.10</td>
<td>$33.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>25.49</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>30.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>19.93</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>23.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>20.12</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>22.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburg</td>
<td>19.76</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>22.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Providence</td>
<td>17.23</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>22.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>22.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Dayton</td>
<td>20.49</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>20.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>19.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>15.78</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>19.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington and Georgetown</td>
<td>13.61</td>
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<td>19.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>16.73</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>18.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Detroit</td>
<td>13.72</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>16.94</td>
</tr>
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Those who are desirous of information on the question of the influence of public-school education on the productive and social value of labor are referred to Mill's Political Economy for facts and principles, also to the circulars published by the Bureau of Education. A part of the reply of A. J. Mundella, Esq., member of the British Parliament for Sheffield, England, to a letter of Gen. Eaton on this subject, is submitted to the reader. The writer employed from three thousand to four thousand laborers. He says: "I would say that an educated man invariably acquires a knowledge of his work with greater facility, and executes it with less cost of supervision, than an uneducated man. The mere rudiments I do not rank high. If a man can barely read and write he has not attained to much. In my opinion a youth cannot be too highly educated for business purposes. I believe there can be no greater mistake than the old and common error that a boy may be made above his business by education. My experience of workmen is that the better a man is educated, and the greater the intellectual resources he possesses, the less he is disposed to any kind of intemperance or excess." Testimony to the same effect was furnished by Gen. Samuel Thomas, of Zanesville, Ohio, employing five hundred common and skilled laborers; by Mr. John W. Browning, bricklayer, president of the Trades Union.

*No returns made since report of 1898.
and secretary of the National Labor Union, New York City; and by others.

The conclusions from practical proofs, as opposed to Mr. White's theory and opinion, are, that knowledge is more to a man than gas to a balloon: that it elevates his moral character, and makes him of more value as a producer to his country; that the general diffusion of knowledge cannot be intrusted to private benevolence; that until Mr. White suggests some other substitute than charity and parochial schools for public schools, the latter should and will be sustained; that the public-school system, more than any other American institution, insures equality the highest and most precious,—the equality of opportunity for self-improvement,—contributes most of all, more than the ballot, to assimilating foreign elements, to disciplining the children of aliens; that it is the balance-wheel of universal suffrage, likely to become the strongest bond of union, and the nationalizing element of our social and political problem. The friends of the system believe that its mission is to impress on the American mind that the highest liberty is freedom from ignorance, and that men are only equal when they obey the laws whose protection they enjoy.