

children in our industrial centres upon the public without any provision to gain a livelihood. This class is growing larger and more dangerous every year. Even in rural districts, schools are becoming wholly inadequate to furnish the kind and degree of education essential to intelligent citizenship. Now one of two things is certain, schools must be provided to train these children in the rudiments of knowledge and of some industrial industry, or build penitentiaries and prisons to hold them in after-life.

Education is not keeping pace with our material growth. There is an advance, but not as rapidly as the exigency demands.

"Many of the States are unable to assist the poorer communities to the necessary extent. Even in many wealthy communities the tax-rate is already so high that it is impracticable to get the people to vote any increase; for the system of direct taxation to which the States and communities are practically confined has the effect of impressing the minds of tax-payers with an ever-present sense of their burdens, while at the same time they must be on their guard against letting the tax-rate become too high as compared with other communities for fear of driving away capital."

Popular education is more necessary now than it ever was before. Popular ignorance is far more dangerous than it was in the days of our forefathers.

"A century ago the negro was a slave, with no political power or influence. To-day he has all the legal and political rights of the most educated Caucasian. A century ago, in many States, ignorant white men were not allowed to vote. To-day they have the ballot in every State in the Union. A century ago they could not readily combine. To-day, owing to the telegraph and steam-engine, they can unite in powerful organizations reaching throughout the country. A century ago they could not have done much harm, even if they had had the ballot and had been able to combine, owing to the fact that the simple organization of society could have stood almost any shock which they could have inflicted. To-day, a blow in one part of the highly complicated organism of our modern society is felt in every other part, and a stoppage of circulation at one point causes a congestion at another. In other words, general education is necessary to-day to the existence of civil society in its present form.

"We are in the presence, then, of one of the most important of our social problems. Our States and communities, either from lack of good-will

or from inability, are failing to solve the difficulty. Our only remaining hope is the Federal government."

We have space only to glance at some considerations which justify an appeal for National aid.

1. Education is a matter of general and not merely local interest. (a) Removal from one section to another is constantly going on. A resident of New York to-day may emigrate to the far West or to the South to-morrow. The sons of New England have educated tens of thousands of the people of the West and great Northwest. (b) Illiteracy in one section is a factor that affects the entire nation. We have an illustration of this in the condition of things at the South at the close of the War; and the same condition exists to-day in South Carolina and Louisiana. The ignorant masses were only tools in the hands of political demagogues, and a conflict with the intelligent classes was inevitable. The Federal government tried to keep the ignoramus in power, but failed.

2. This question has a radical bearing on our National Legislature. There are many communities at the South to-day where, through the dense ignorance of the "poor whites" and the "negro," government is in the hands of a small minority. And yet the representatives of such communities have the same relative weight in Congress and the electoral college as those chosen by the actual majority-vote of intelligent free citizens. Ought such a state of things to continue? The Southern slaveholder was given a representation in his slaves; but now that slavery is abolished it is quite time to get rid of this state of things and put a Western or a New England representative on a par with a South Carolinian and a Louisianian in respect to influence. But this cannot be done till education adequate to the emergency is furnished. And this will not, cannot, be done, at least for a long time to come, without Federal aid.

"Popular education, then, is a matter of such general importance that, in case of necessity, we should be justified in calling upon the national government to assist in its maintenance, even if there were no precedent for such action,