The States in which this illiteracy prevails either
cannot or will not provide adequate systems of
education for their own youth. But however this
may be, the fact remains that the whole country
is directly interested in the education of every
child that lives within its borders. The igno-
rance of any part of the American people so deep-
lies concerns all the rest that there can be no
doubt of the right to pass laws compelling the
attendance of every child at school. Believing that
such is now required and ought to be enacted, we
have heretofore been on record in favor of strin-
gent laws to this end.

In the presence of this appalling picture pre-
sented by the last census we hold it to be the
imperative duty of Congress to take hold of this
important subject, and, without waiting for the
States to adopt liberal school systems within
their respective boundaries, to proceed vigorously
upon the work of universal education.

The National Government, with its immense
resources, can carry the benefits of a sound
common-school education to the door of every
poor man from Maine to Texas, and to withhold
this boon is to say the greatest assurance it has of
its own perpetuity. As a part of the American
people we unite most emphatically with others
who have already spoken on this subject, in urg-
ing Congress to lay the foundation for a great
national system of aid to education at its next
session.

In this connection, and as germane to the sub-
ject of education under national auspices, we
would most respectfully and earnestly request
Congress to authorize the appointment of a com-
misison of three or more persons of suitable char-
acter and qualifications to ascertain the legal
claims of freedmen, and, if they can, to a large fund
now in the United States Treasury, to be appro-
priated for the payment of bounties to colored
soldiers and sailors; and to provide by law
that at the expiration of three or five
years the balance remaining in the treasury be
distributed among the colored colleges of the
country, giving the preference as to amounts to the
schools that are doing effective work in in-
dustrial branches.

FREEDMEN'S BANK.

The colored people have suffered much on ac-
count of the failure of the Freedmen's bank.
Their loss by this institution was a peculiar
hardship, coming as it did upon them in the days
of their greatest weakness. It is certain that the
depositors in this institution were led to believe
that as soon as it was chartered it and established
its headquarters at the capital the Government
in some way was responsible for the safe keeping
of their money.

Without the dissemination of this belief it
would never have had the confidence of the peo-
ple as it did nor have secured such an immense
deposit. Nobody could speak for the
Government ever corrected this impression. On
the contrary, Congress continued to legislate
for the bank as if all that had been claimed for
it was true.

Under these circumstances, together with
much more that might be said in favor of such a
measure, we ask Congress to consider the unfor-
tonate victims of that institution, and thus
carry hope and give to many fresh encour-
gagement in the battle of life.

BOUNTY AND PENSION LAWS.

We desire, also, to call the attention of Con-
gress and the country to the bounty and pen-
sion laws and to the filing of original claims. We
ask for the enactment of an act extending the time
for filing original claims beyond the expiration
of the present law.

This we do for the reason that many of the
soldiers and sailors that served in the war of the
rebellion and their heirs, and especially colored
claimants living in parts of the country where
they have but meager means of information,