

society. Man is a creature of law--his nature adapted to government and its various functions. He sympathizes with its modes, and forms, and operations, and this, from the fact that there is not a single shade of revolution in the political aspect of a country, but it is felt to the extreme limits of the body politic; operating upon the individual being of all its subjects.

The deprivation of our people of the elective franchise, and a participation in the various rounds of public duty, shows the evil here spoken of. The powers that should have been thus employed, have not lain dormant. A trait which we possess in common with our common humanity, has been manifested in us. Powers will have exercise, either healthy or unhealthy. The impartial and proscriptive non-suffrage act, has been to us hurtful in the extreme. The powers that should naturally have been thus exercised, were wrested from their legitimate employment. It has been the source of evil, unmitigated, unalleviated; without even an approach to an adequate benefit. It is true we might become possessed of the immunities of citizens and voters by the property qualification. But this spur, this incitement as it is regarded by some, lost all its zest, in the bitter reflection, in the searing conviction, that we were made aliens and strangers in the country of our birth; a disfranchised class in the very land whose liberties they helped achieve by patriotic service, and whose soil is enriched by their purest and noblest blood!

But this is not all. When we were deprived of the elective franchise, the blow given which severed that hold, by which respect, deference, and consideration is obtained by the poorest and humblest citizen. Our fellow citizens saw they had nothing to expect from us. We became a proscribed, depressed class. We felt everywhere we went, in all our relations, that we had been made separate from the rest of our fellow citizens.

The pure and refreshing waters of literary excellence, were not allowed to flow by us, to quench the burning thirst of an eager and longing people. In the various religious bodies, they have not found their purity of Christian feeling powerful and universal enough to treat man, aside from arbitrary distinctions, "without respect to persons." In short, the means and facilities--the ways and avenues to wealth and influence were shut against us.

We ask, what might be expected of any people in such circumstances? What might be anticipated as legitimate results from such a condition?

Under like disabilities we perceive the sufferings of the Irish in Ireland, the degradation of the Greek, the besotted stupidity of the lower castes in India, and the abasement and continual decrease of the aborigines of our own country. So in this State; under like sufferings, under like injustice, the greater amount of crime and sufferings among our people, have proceeded from a non-participation in the prerogatives of citizenship. Notwithstanding all these difficulties and depressions, calculated as they are to sicken the heart to a great extent, and make the soul give up, we have nevertheless been enabled to live above them.

We have been deprived of the elective franchise during the last twenty years. In a free country, this is ever a stimulant to enterprise, a means of influence and a source of respect. The possession of it sends life, vigor and energy through the entire heart of a people. The want of it in a community, is the cause of carelessness, intellectual inertness, and indolence springing above all these depressing circumstances, and exerting ourselves with unwonted alacrity, by native industry, by the accumulation of property, we have helped contribute, to a considerable extent, not only the means of the state, but likewise to its character and respectability.

We claim, that there is no consideration whatever in existence, on account of which, the odious proscription of which we complain, should be continued. The want of intelligence, our misfortunes and the crimes of others, which was once urged against us, does not now exist. Again: *we are the descendants of some of the earliest settlers of the State.* We can trace our ancestry back to those who first pierced the almost impenetrable forests that then lifted their high and stately heads in silent grandeur to the skies. When the vast and trackless wilderness, that had alone answered to the fierce roar of the roaring beast, or the whoop of the wild native, spread itself before the earlier settlers; our fathers were among those, who, with sinewy frame and muscular arm, went forth to humble that wilderness in its native pride. Since that time, our fathers, and we ourselves, have lent our best strength in cultivation