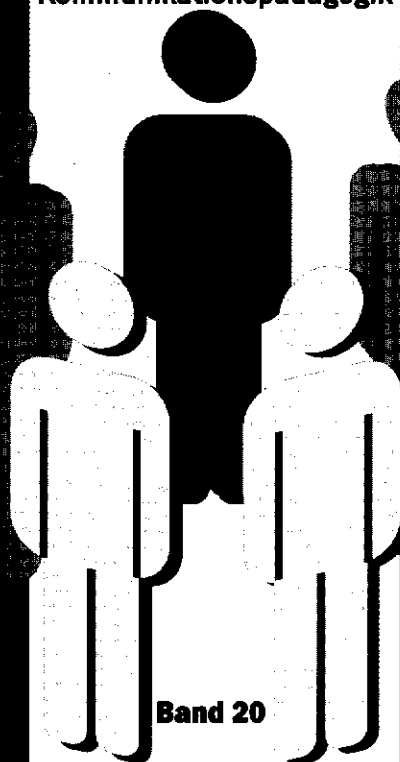


Henner Barthel
Kevin M. Carragee (Eds.)

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Donald E. Williams

Conditioning the Young Mind: Assuring Cultural
Compliance through Textbook Instruction in the Schools
of the Antebellum and Warring South in the United States
of America

Anchoring Unquenchable Hate

Rare is it that poems and songs are written to register the unmitigated hate of the authors and to inculcate hate in the minds of readers and listeners. The following Civil War verse, however, is a notable exception. Entitled “The Good Old Rebel,” it was written shortly after the war by a Southerner, Innes Randolph, and widely published in colloquial idiom. To illustrate the tenor and thrust of this piece, carried in Reed Smith’s book, *South Carolina Ballads*, these three of the six verses carry the gist of the poem’s message:

I hates the Yankee nation
and everything they do;
I hates the Declaration
of Independence, too.
I hates the glorious Union,
'tis dripping with our blood;
I hates the striped banner –
I fit it all I could.
* * * * *

Three hundred thousand Yankees
is stiff in southern dust;
We got three hundred thousand
before they conquered us.
They died of southern fever

and southern steel and shot;
 I wish it was three millions
 instead of what we got.

I can't take up my musket
 and fight 'em no more,
 But I ain't a-goin' to love 'em,
 Now that is sartin sure.
 And I don't want no pardon
 for what I was and am;
 I won't be reconstructed
 and I don't care a damn
 (Smith 1928, 45f.).

This poetic moan, not to be mistaken for pastime doggerel, carries the message of uncompromising hatred. Spitting out withering scorn, Randolph targets not only abstract concepts of philosophical instruments providing the bases of government, but people, individually and in the mass.

What life forces, other than the monstrous terror of face-to-face battle combat could have generated this intensity of detestation? What activities, practices, and agencies exerted the vigor to tap into the minds of citizens of the southern states comprising the Confederate States of America and create the foundational structure for corporate abhorrence toward a contrasting aggregate of people populating the northern states constituting the Federal Union – an abhorrence endowed with extraordinary staying power in the decades prior to the Civil War, during the war, and, in some quarters, continuing into the 21st century?

A venerated axiom honored by nations around the world striving to enhance civilization is that formal education shapes minds. To sponsor in broad sweep societal education is to confirm the identification, vitality, and destiny of the commonweal of a people bonded by shared concerns. Directed educational enterprise can be both prescriptive and protective for premises embodying values and truths deemed worthy of perpetuation.

In southern states before and during the Civil War years, as identifiable southern character became more and more perceivable and esteemed, the citizenry of these states, constituted predominantly by people of the white race, relied on their schools for the young, the strongholds for educational effort, to cultivate in girls and boys an understanding of and appreciation for the precepts and practices defining life in the South. The purpose of this paper is to explore how this program of instruction was conducted as well as to delineate both its proximate and ultimate effects.

Considered wholly, a strict phasic progression does not appear evident; those in charge of planning and providing teaching in the schools posited the North as a formidable enemy and, simultaneously, the South as a bulwark for tested and proven ideas and laudable living patterns. All through the Southland, there became numerous resentful Southerners who viewed the North with calculated, irrevocable hate.

In a song written in the second year of the war, 1862, entitled "The Bonnie Blue Flag," Annie Chambers-Ketchum depicts the North as an infamous assailant. (In 1906, Dolores Bacon included this song in her compilation entitled, *Songs Every Child Should Know*.) Here is the second of seven stanzas:

As long as the Union was faithful to her trust,
Like friends and like brethren, kind were we and just;
But now when Northern treachery attempts our rights to mar,
We hoist on high the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.
(Bacon 1906, 126f.)

Echoing the accusatory sentiments expressed in this song were similar statements regarding the North in the instructional materials presented in textbooks of the period. Southern educators were alert to the impact school textbooks potentially had on students, not only in regard to the disciplinary focus but also to the ideational maturation of young people. In his textbook,

The Confederate First Reader, Richard McAllister Smith testified that the prose and poetry selections had been selected “to interest and instruct pupils and to elevate their ideas, form correct tastes, and instill proper sentiments” (Smith 1864, 3).

The centrality of textbooks to the educational endeavor was emphasized by Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, writing to a large assembly of teachers in Columbia, South Carolina: “It would be difficult to overestimate the influence of primary books in the promotion of character and development of mind. [...] The first impressions on the youthful mind are to its subsequent current of thought, what the springs are to the river they form” (Proceedings of the Convention... 1863, 18). Corroborating this point of view was another high government official, Zebulon Vance, Governor of North Carolina: “This is certainly the time [...] [for] impressing the minds of our children with the effusions of Southern genius” (19). Relating the matter of textbook usage to the encompassing context of which it was a part, advocates for the cause of education explained the pivotal role schools played in the besieged South:

We will carry on this war [...] in the school room. [...] In the minds and hearts of our younger children there is a citadel whose possession, by good or bad principles, is to be decisive of our future fate... [If the child is] free from proper educational influence, [...] it will be debilitating and dwarfing the mind [...] and rendering him incapable of the [...] important task of preserving freedom (Address to the People... 1861, 8-9).

Within this context of ominously threatening circumstances, textbook writers vehemently chastised the North. In her textbook, *The Geographical Reader for the Dixie Children*, Marina Branson Moore provided explanation for the cited despicable actions of the North:

Northern people began to preach, to lecture, and to write about the sin of slavery. The money for which they sold their slaves was now partly spend [sic] in trying to persuade the southern states to send their slaves back to

Africa. And when the territories were settled they were not willing for any of them to become slaveholding. This would soon have made the North much stronger than the South and many of the men said they would vote for a law to free all the Negroes in the country. The southern men tried to show them how unfair this would be, but still they kept on.

In the year 1860, the abolitionists became strong enough to elect one of their men for President. Abraham Lincoln was a weak man, and the South believed he would allow laws to be made which would deprive them of their rights. So the southern states seceded, and elected Jefferson Davis for their President. This so enraged President Lincoln that he declared war, and has exhausted nearly all the strength of the nation in a vain attempt to whip the South back into the Union. Thousands of lives have been lost, and the earth has been drenched with blood, but still Abraham Lincoln is unable to conquer the 'rebels' as he calls the South. The South only asked to be let alone, and to divide public property equally. It would have been wise in the North to have said to her southern sisters, 'If you are not content to dwell with us longer, depart in peace. We will divide the inheritance with you, and may you be a great nation.' [...] The [northern] people are ingenious, and enterprising, and are noted for their tact in 'driving a bargain.' They are refined, and intelligent on all subjects but that of Negro slavery; on this, they are mad (Moore 1863, 13f.).

In the textbook, *First Book in Composition*, authored by L. Branson, who stated it was "especially designed for the use of southern schools," the writer placed a choice before the young pupils: "Can we stand patiently by, and see our property torn from us? No. Each generous emotion of our hearts forbids it. Let this tyrant tremble, and all his satellites [sic] beware!" (Branson 1863, 37).

Other textbook authors, in order to make their condemnation of the North all the more telling, juxtaposed the allegedly nefarious war offensive of the North with the shining retaliation qualities of the South. K. J. Stewart, in his textbook, *A Geography for Beginners*, offered this contrast after having discussed the southern region literally as an overflowing cornucopia of nature's bounties:

Every effort that human ingenuity could contrive, or immense resources of money and vast armaments on sea and land could accomplish, was made by the Northern government to capture the capital and other important places,

and break up the political organization of the Confederacy. But by the constant, evident, and acknowledged aid of the God of Battles and King of Nations, these efforts have all failed, and, at vast expense of suffering and blood, the people of the Southern States have fought their own way to independence and the respect and amity of the great nations of the world. (Stewart 1864, 43)

Moore, in her *Geographical Reader*, instructs readers about the ravaging done by the North in defiance of the inventive, persevering determination of the South:

This is a great country! The Yankees thought to starve us out when they sent their ships to guard our seaport towns. But we have learned to make many things, to do without others, and above all to trust in the smiles of the God of Battles. [...] We were considered an indolent, weak people, but our enemies have found us strong, because we had justice on one [our?] side. (Moore 1863, 14)

Chiseling this juxtaposition more precisely for the benefit of her pupils, Adelaide de Vendel Chaudron, in her book, *The Third Reader*, provided crisp sentence reading exercises such as, “We fight for right, but they for might” (Chaudron 1864, 98).

In the school rooms of the southern states in which young students were exposed regularly to anti-North attitudes as they studied textbook materials, the Federal Union, in the minds of these developing girls and boys, was doubtlessly typed as a sinister entity – one to be feared and hated. Basis was provided in the textbooks to regard the North as grossly inconsiderate of the South, committed to holding the region in subjugation, tyrannical in its resolve to exert economic and moral dominion over the southern people. Moreover, the North had steadfastly and mercilessly assaulted the South in terms of the region’s security and livelihood.

The message to the children, “We have logical reason to hate the people of the North,” was projected clearly and registered firmly.

Rhetorical Framing

In the educational setting, the South was motivated to instruct its children in the wisdom of the South's prevailing life patterns and about the blessings of its natural resources which together made for a promising future. To castigate another alternative interpretation in the flux of the times led to the upholding of the colliding alternative if it were to claim the abiding fealty of the receiving audience. The rhetorical motif suggested here was framed in the relevant decision-making process involving young students in the antebellum and Civil War periods. Disdaining to choose the alternative of having a more tolerant attitude toward the North, they faced the decision of whether they could summon up a long-term, judicious pledge to their home area, the slave-holding South, which had been emphatically and widely censured.

If this censure were to be revoked, the institution that had long drawn fire from the abolitionists and other liberal groups in the North, and requiring confirming vindication, was that of human slavery. Abolished in other societies, slavery was firmly grounded in the ongoing life of the southern states. The practice of people having legal title of ownership in other people had been referred to as the very cornerstone of the societal structure by the Vice President of the Confederacy, Alexander Stephens. In the South, slavery was a settled principle. As a time-honored social institution, it charted life. Significantly, as a standard of the people, it was accorded the prestige of what Daniel O'Keefe terms a cultural truism – "a belief that within a given culture [...] is rarely, if ever attacked" (O'Keefe 2002, 247).

Before and during the Confederacy period, the commanding social thought, initiated in childhood, held there was virtue in maintaining a layered society – there was the slavery layer and there was the separate broader layer for all other people not classified in the slavery layer. The premise stipulating there was a permanent place in society for slavery, made secure by governmental, educational, and religious agencies, led to what another rhetorical theorist, Herbert Simons, refers to as a “cultural ideology.” The system of thought upholding slavery was hegemonic, i.e., it was indisputably all-controlling (Simons 2001, 48).

With the schoolroom providing them their lectern and their audience, teachers, in writing textbooks for their students, straightforwardly defended the institution of slavery as a positive good. Classroom teachers identified with their assumed role of being defense advocates. In an address circulated in 1861 among the citizens of North Carolina and emanating from a conference of teachers and friends of education in Raleigh, this challenge was clearly given to teachers:

[Our] struggle for national existence and independence [...] is to be maintained and carried on [...] in the schoolroom [...] [to] prepare a people to be a free and self-governing nationality. [...] [We who have] an official connection with our schools [...] are placed as watchers over an interest of vital importance to the welfare of our beloved country, and the plain and paramount obligations springing out of this relation override all other considerations.

The leading proponent of this position was Calvin H. Wiley, State Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina, who could have personally authored this solemn declaration of the need to be met: “We all know the fact that the whole civilized world entertains erroneous opinions in regard to the state of society in the slave-holding states of America [...] The institutions of no people have ever been more misrepresented” (Address to the People... 1861, 1f., 4f.). Wiley’s glowing estimate of the

future of slavery in his state appeared in his well-received textbook, *The North Carolina Reader*, which believably exalted the promising features of living in North Carolina, one of which he asserted was the endless need for and supply of the manual labor of slaves: “Here the slave owner can find swamp lands where slave-labor in farming operations will always be profitable; and he can also in the mines and forests of turpentine trees, in the fisheries, and on works of internal improvements find good employments for the same species of property” (Wiley 1851, 85). Designed by Wiley to have wide appeal in the state, this book, he envisioned, would go “with the Bible and the almanac into every home” (Johnson 1937, 315).

Faith in formal education was justified, it was claimed, because schools had been the proven force for “rapidly elevating the tone of society among the ruling race.” Furthermore, the active effort of this ruling race had a compelling unique service to provide:

The Southern States of America [are] distinguished by a peculiar social system, and one obnoxious to the phariseism of the world, [and] are especially called on to think in such things for themselves, and to see that their children are instructed out of their own writings. [...] [We are] firmly convinced that our own position on the subject of slavery is the right one (Address to the People... 1861, 10-11).

Discrediting the opinion sometimes held by people outside the region, that there were no common binding interests between slaveholders and non-slaveholders, a correspondent in an 1860 issue of the *Southern Recorder* maintained that slavery

gives independence and dignity to the poor man of the South. It is that which makes him feel his equality with the slave owner, for however poor the [white] man in the South may be, he can stand erect when he looks down and knows [...] the Negro is below, and will remain so (Kaestle 1983, 207).

Magnifying the primary psychological nature and advantage of slavery, the trustees of an academy for women in Fredricksburg, Virginia, declared “that the South without slavery would be like Shakespeare’s Hamlet without a Hamlet” (ib. 205).

Many Southerners, teachers and other shapers of public thought, were sensitively aware that authors and publishers in the northern states had long monopolized the school textbook market throughout the South. Even before war convulsed the populace, educators were calling for southern writers to guide instruction on southern topics in southern schools. As North Carolina teachers declared, “If we are ever emancipated from thralldom to foreign influences, we must have our own authors and our own publishers [...] If our schools are kept up, they must be supplied with books printed at the South” (Address to the People... 1861, 13).

This 1861 reference to “foreign influences” unmistakably implicated the Federal Union. As early as 1845, it was charged these “foreign” publishers provided textbooks for the South containing “sentiments not only offensive but actually poisonous to the mind” (Ezell 1951, 306).

In response to this voiced need, a welcomed spate of South-oriented school textbooks was disseminated from publishers in Raleigh, North Carolina, Richmond, Virginia, Mobile, Alabama, Greensboro, South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina, and other Confederate cities, until 1865, the last year of the War Between the States. Affirmative implicative support on behalf of the institution of slavery was their hallmark. Desiring to assure this emphasis, educational leaders such as William A. Smith, President of Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, were in favor of “purging school texts of any sentiments hostile to slavery” (Eaton 1964, 76f.).

Mathematical problems, for instance, directly posed questions pertaining to negotiations related to slavery. Even though his 1857 textbook, *Elements*

of Algebra, was published in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Daniel Harvey Hill presented arithmetic problems such as these:

A planter, who knows that his negro-man can do a piece of work in five days, when the days are 12 hours long, asks how long it will take him when the days are 15 hours long.

A gentleman, who owns 20 slaves, had laid in a twelve-months' supply for them, when he purchased 10 more. How long will his supplies last?

A planter purchased a number of slaves for \$36,000. If he had purchased 20 more for the same sum, the average cost would have been \$150 less. Required: The number of slaves, and their average price.

In each instance, the condition of slavery is in place. The computation assignments involved are presented as reflective of life; the considerations are customary.

In contrast, when Hill detailed problems referring to instances of fraud, the perpetrators were citizens of the North, as these examples illustrate:

A Yankee mixes a certain number of wooden nutmegs, which cost him 1/4 cent apiece, with a quantity of real nutmegs, worth four cents apiece, and sells the whole assortment for \$44, and gains \$3.75 by the fraud. How many wooden nutmegs were there?

A man in Cincinnati [Ohio] purchased 10,000 pounds of bad pork, at one cent per pound, and paid so much per pound to put it through a chemical process, by which it would appear sound, and then sold it at an advanced price, clearing \$450 by the fraud. The price at which he sold the pork per pound, multiplied by the cost per pound of the chemical process was three cents. Required: The price at which he sold it, and the cost of the chemical process (Hill 1857, 106, 124, 321).

On the basis of these examples, it would be natural for the children to associate Northerners with deceptive business practices. Fraud was represented as being purposeful. While the appellation, Yankee, customarily designating Northerners, was regarded by some Northern people as a respectful nickname, the term in the South before, during, and after the Civil War years ranked high among the most opprobrious word

usages. This attitude of youngsters toward the nickname and toward people of the North to whom it referred was surely intensified by disdainful reliance on it in the schoolrooms.

Typical of the defenses directed to young students was that of Moore in her textbook, *The Geographical Reader for the Dixie Children*, published in Raleigh:

The men who inhabit the globe are not all alike. Those in Europe and America are mostly white and are called the Caucasian race. This race is civilized, and is far above the others. [...] The African or Negro race is found in Africa. They are slothful and vicious, but possess little cunning. They are very cruel to each other, and when they have want, they sell their prisoners to the white people for slaves. [...] The slaves who are found in America are in much better condition. They are better fed, better clothed, and better instructed than in their native country. These people . . . are descendants of Ham, the son of Noah, who was cursed because he did not treat his father with respect. It was told him he should serve his brethren forever. [...] We can not tell how they came to be black, and have wool on their heads (Moore 1863, 10).

By implication and by explication, capping the passage with derision, Moore wrote to provide justification for slavery.

As teachers and textbooks posited a frame for decision-making, the alternative of condoning human slavery was stringently reinforced for the young heirs of the historic status quo.

Holy Bible Justification

The lodestar in justificatory discourse permeating Confederate textbooks was the beacon for guiding the life of the Christian, *The Holy Bible*. Classroom teachers, courted by book publishers, counseled: [To defend our social condition, we must be] shut up to the Holy Scriptures [...] We have to begin to construct and defend theories from the simple word of God; let

us at once fill our schools with books which draw all their ethical doctrines from this divine source” (Address to the People... 1861, 12).

Textbook author Richard Sterling contended as he dedicated a section of his book, *Our Own Third Reader: For the Use of Schools and Families*, to the topic, “Bible View of Slavery”: “The study of the Bible is a great matter [...] It speaks only truth on all matters. He who knows the Bible well may be wise and good and happy, though he never reads any other book” (Sterling 1862, 161).

Sterling provides for students direct citations to verses in both The Old and New Testaments testifying to the beatification of the practice of slavery. In the book of Exodus, Chapter One, for instance, there is reference to a servant faithful to his master: “His master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever.” Similar supporting excerpts are given from various books of the Bible including Genesis, Ephesians, and I Timothy. From the book of Titus, Chapter Two, these verses are presented: “Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please him [sic] well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”

Elucidating, Sterling stated that when the words, servant, bondman, and bondmaid are used in The Bible, these are synonyms for the word, slave. He continues by describing the context of biblical times:

Slaves were a possession, bought, sold, and inherited. [...] So it continued all through the Bible history, all through the period from Malachi to Christ, and all through the New Testament period. [...] [We can infer from] the phraseology in Christ’s language and parables that there were slaves in almost every family who were able to afford them. [...] They were in all the primitive churches, believing masters and believing slaves, and there is no hint of the unlawfulness of this relation, any more than that of the husband and wife, or parent and child. The whole Bible has come from a slaveholding people. It is full of allusions to this institution (ib. 213f.).

Supplementing Sterling, but writing more directly to the immediacy of the topic, S. L. Farr admonished children in the book, published by the North Carolina Christian Advocate Publishing Company, *The First Reader for Southern Schools*: “It is not a sin to own slaves. It is right. God wills that some men should be slaves, and some masters. It is a sin to treat a servant ill. He is a man, and Christ died for him. It is not best to set him free, but to keep him and be kind to him” (Farr 1864, 17).

Farr emphatically charged the teachers to assume responsibility for the successful projection of the textbook materials if the children were to learn: “The teacher should question the pupils upon the truths contained in each lesson, and this should be done until the teacher is satisfied that the lesson is understood” (3).

Moore complied with this sense of charge by providing in catechistic format a series of questions to guide review, such as these exchanges:

Question: Is the African savage in this country?

Answer: They are docile and religious here.

Question: How are they in Africa where they first came from?

Answer: They are very ignorant, cruel and wretched (Moore 1863, 37).

The Holy Bible, relied on in absolute terms by teachers and textbook writers, provided divine, supreme sanction for the practice of human slavery. By holy writ, this traditional institution of society was blessed by ecclesiastical decree as interpreted for young school children.

Argument by Definition

Fundamentally founding their defense of the practice of slavery on biblical scripture, pro-slavery advocates were also concerned about basing

their affirmative cases on what they considered to be sound definitions of basic concepts. Representing this concern was E. N. Elliott, President of Planters' College in Port Gibson, Mississippi. Writing one year before hostilities began in 1861, he expressed objection to conventional definitions of the terms, "slave" and "slavery." Amplifying his definitional position, he offered a juxtaposed contrast in his book, *Cotton is King and Pro-Slavery Arguments*, which served as something of a mainstay for the defenders of slavery:

A slave is merely a "chattel" in a human form; a *thing* to be bought and sold, and treated worse than a brute; a being without rights, privileges, or duties. Now, if this is a correct definition of the word, we totally object to the terms, and deny that we have any such institution as *slavery* among us. [...] [The South] had received from Africa a few hundred thousand pagan savages, and had developed them into millions of civilized Christians, happy in themselves, and useful to the world. They [the southern states] had never made the inquiry whether the system were fundamentally wrong, but they judged it by its fruits, which were beneficent to all. [...] We understand the nature of the Negro race; and in the relation in which the providence of God has placed them to us, they are happy and useful members of society, and are fast rising in the scale of intelligence and civilization, and the time may come when they will be capable of enjoying the blessings of freedom and self-government. [...] But we know that the time has not yet come, that this liberty which is a blessing to *us*, would be a curse to *them* (Elliott 1860, v, viii).

The condition of slavery itself, according to Elliot, should be defined by its intended functioning, and not by abstract legalisms. He argued that slavery should be understood against a template of rights of the slave vis-à-vis the rights of the master. For the edification of teachers and the people of the South at large, Elliot declared:

Slavery is the duty and obligation of the slave to labor for the mutual benefit of both master and slave, under a warrant to the slave of protection, and a comfortable subsistence, under all circumstances. The person of the slave is not property [...] but the right to his labor is property, and may be transferred like any other property.

The master [...] has a right to the obedience and labor of the slave, but the slave has also his mutual rights in the master: the right of protection, the right of counsel and guidance, the right of subsistence, the right of care and attention in sickness and old age. He has also a right in his master as the sole arbiter in all his wrongs and difficulties, and as a merciful judge and dispenser of law to award the penalty of his misdeeds (vii).

To be sure, many people living in the era of the Confederacy would regard this definition as being overindulgent and compromising. These people would be more attracted to the terse definition stated by Farr: “Slaves [are] *owned* by their masters” (Italics are added.) (Farr 1864, 16).

Projecting definition into life was the approach preferred by the group of teachers meeting in deliberative session in Columbia in 1863. To the public, they made this statement as civic-minded counselors:

The theory of our [slavery] practice is that the superior should adopt the inferior as a member of his household, placing him under his own immediate supervision and that of his wife and children, where the sympathies between man and man are brought into active play, where every want is seen and felt for, where every crime is discovered and punished, and where the influences of religion and of a constant observation of the habits of a higher civilization are allowed to exhibit their educational and disciplinary power.

We hold that if we are to have others in subjection to us at all, it must be in this way, and that a system of personal servitude of this kind, and for whose origin we are not responsible, is justifiable, and the only kind of paramount domination of race over race that is justifiable by the light of God’s revealed truth (Address to the People... 1861, 12).

Expounding a reasoned definition of slavery, many educators sponsored for their pupils and for the populace at large a fundamentally humane rationale for continuing this practice. Implementing this humanistic definition, southerners upholding the slavery system could proceed convinced the system was sound and justified. Other educators, however, held that slavery, in concept and in operation, was based on the ruling principle of ownership, i.e., some people literally *owned* other people and

could effect arbitrary control over them, maybe considerably or maybe inconsiderately.

Demonstration in Reality

Biblical justification and definitional soundness attempts launched the discussion of slavery into the realm of its actual living-out, i.e., its day-to-day reality. The defenders of this institution that had been woven into the fabric of community life for almost two and one-half centuries portrayed slavery, cognizant of allegedly isolated heinous aberrations, as a decided good.

Hypothesizing believable narratives, slavery's champions provided illustrations of how camaraderie was enjoyed between master and slave. Samuel Lander, author of *The Verbal Primer*, told the story of Uncle Tom cautioning his master about keeping rein of his horse as a train approached: "Take care there, Mas' John; that horse will throw you, if you don't mind. Don't you see the train coming up the road? Woe, [sic] Dobbin; woe, sir. . . Pull the reins tight, Mas' John; I wouldn't have Dobbin to throw you off for the world" (Lander 1864, 36).

In another story, Lander tells of a little girl who approached Uncle Tom, who was sawing wood, with a cheery "Good Morning" and a comment, "Uncle Tom, here you are still hard at work." The slave replies, "Oh! Yes, Miss; that's all poor Tom is fit for." "But wouldn't you rather be free, Uncle Tom," asked the little girl, "so that you could work for yourself?" "Why, no, Miss," replied the old slave, "Don't you know Master gives me everything I want, and takes care of me when I am sick? What do I want to be free for?" (27).

Other textbook writers built the case for slavery by discussing the status of slaves as a class, not as individual men and women. Moore, for instance, presented this assurance to young pupils who read her textbook, *The Geographical Reader for the Dixie Children*:

(Re Virginia:) There are many planters who own large numbers of slaves. These are generally well treated, and are as happy a people as any under the sun. If they are sick, Master sends for the doctor; if the crop is short, they are sure of enough to save life; if they are growing old, they know they will be provided for; and in time of war, they generally remain quietly at home, while the Master goes and spills his blood for the country.

(Re South Carolina:) [Slaves] are hardly so well treated as in North Carolina and Virginia, but they have the Gospel preached to them, and are generally contented and happy.

(On the coast:) [The enemy has] stolen many of the Negroes who tilled the land. They told the slaves they were free, and even formed regiments of them to fight against their masters. But the Negro is too cowardly for a soldier, and so he is but little service to his northern friends (Moore 1863, 19f.).

The inclusive scene of the lives of the slaves, according to Moore, was a generally heartening one of bliss, disrupted occasionally by bothersome mistreatment from misguided masters. Moore provided her child readers with this overview:

[Slaves] are generally well used and often have as much pocket money as their mistresses. They are contented and happy and many of them are Christians. The sin of the South lies not in holding slaves, but they are sometimes mistreated. Let all the little boys and girls remember that slaves are human, and that God will hold them to account for treating them with injustice (14).

Impact of the Pro-Slavery Discourse

This concerted response to the challenge from the despised northern states to defend slavery and to the stated need for children's school textbooks to be written by Southerners and published within the geographical boundaries of the Confederate States of America was impressive. The intention of these writers was to present the case for the continuation of human slavery in their midst so that young students could comprehend the averred wisdom on this formerly widely accepted societal norm, now being fiercely attacked by many people living in the northern states. The presumption regarding the rightness of slavery now faced dethronement by force of ideas and by force of arms. Crucial to the success of this campaign was the confirmational reception of the pro-slavery message by school children, the consumers of the admonishments and assurances directed to them as the South's future citizens.

Well-primed in the contention that the Bible carried the word of God and, as such, served as the ultimate source shaping thought and behavior, these children could react profoundly to textbooks setting forth scriptural dicta sanctifying slavery. Nothing equaled biblical documentation to provide the stamp of finality to a declaration about the life around them. That life, for the great majority of these children, did not feature slavery in the near-at-hand sense, as few of their parents owned slaves. But slavery, indeed, was a key factor across the spectrum of southern life. Children saw slaves working in the fields and walking along the roads, listened to adult talk about slaves, experienced daily the manifest distinctions, subtle and conspicuous, upholding the tenet that the black and white races were and should be separate in all channels of life. For young readers, these distinctions settled the question of how should slavery be defined: Slavery was a way of life dramatically different from the way in which white

people lived, in terms of background, assumptions, patterns, and expectations. For them, the presumption that slavery should continue was carried. Slavery, in the children's way of thinking, was a solid and everlasting given for life.

Slaves had their place and white people had their place in God's world, and all seemed well. Furthermore, the controlling influence of the senders of these messages to the schoolchildren – their teachers and their textbooks – provided “the conjunction of expertise and trustworthiness [that] make for reliable communication” (O’Keefe 2002, 183f.). Expertise and trustworthiness – were not these two salient marks of character personified for young students by the accepted prototypes of the respected classroom teachers and the respected authors of the textbooks effectively relied on?

The children's prevailing orientation was demonstrated by the textbook stories casting slaves in subservient roles and in contexts in which they were eternally obedient to a Master; in actuality, they were owned by the ever-present superior.

Textbook discussions of the institution of slavery as it was perceived in the South during the antebellum and Civil War periods enabled the region's coming generation to feel entirely comfortable growing up in the milieu of slave and free. Furthermore, and more significantly, their textbooks did very little to kindle imagining later life proceeding minus the historically central component of human slavery. For school children in the southern states in mid-nineteenth century, reading their textbooks and listening to their teachers, who were probably regarded as their most trusted public authority figures, the status quo, insofar as the castigated institution endemic to their experienced surroundings was concerned, was assailed from afar but not refuted. Even when slavery was terminated by the aegis of law generated by the Federal Union, its belief accoutrements embedded in the vestige of socially assigned superiority of the white race over the black

race would endure indefinitely. Pro-slavery sentiment bequeathed this legacy as a strong and lasting determinant of both policy and practice within the diversity characterizing the restored nation.

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