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George Fitzhugh on Land Monopoly, from Lippincott's Magazine

THE SEPTEMBER MAGAZINES.

From the paper by George Fitzhugh we take the following Southern opinion about "Land Monopoly:" --

Land Monopoly is the sole parent of civilization, and land monopoly has been universal, in all ages, with the white and Chinese races, and wholly unpractised by the uncivilized races. The latter races are incapable of land monopoly, and therefore can never have self-sustaining civilization. But we see around us, every day, that they may have an exotic civilization. Where a few whites have monopolized the lands, the landless whites and landless negroes must practise the arts of civilized life or perish, for they can no longer live, like brutes, on the voluntary fruits of the earth.

They have become the subjects of capital (and all capital results from land monopoly), and they must fabricate the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life for the capitalists, or be without homes or food or fuel or clothes. In fabricating necessaries, comforts and luxuries for the rich, they learn, and continually practise, all the arts of civilized life. Property, or capital, has ever been a close monopoly among the civilized races, and ever unknown, as an institution, among the other races. Any people who are capable of land monopoly, and will practise it, will at once become civilized.

Were it possible to divide lands equally among all the whites, each man would have to labor for his own support; for there being no landless, no one could command the labor of others. The consequence would be, that nothing but the merest necessaries of life could be produced, and the whites thus circumstanced would at once become decivilized. Men never fabricate luxuries for themselves, but make them for others to procure necessaries for themselves. None but a madman would build a fine house or make fine furniture or clothing or equipage for his own use. Were he to attempt it, he would have no time left to produce the necessaries of life, and must starve. If lands were equally divided, or if lands were in common among the whites, civilization would perish. It is the dominion of capital over labor that begets, sustains, and advances civilization. Were there no

inequalities of property, there could be no civilization. There is no accumulated wealth, no capital, no inequalities of property, no land monopoly among the uncivilised races. Liberty (in its broadest sense) and social equality are enjoyed by all. They are all ignorant, half-starved paupers. Place them among whites, and subject them, like poor whites, to the dominion of capital, and they necessarily acquire civilization, but it is in most instances a feeble, sickly, exotic civilization. They are contented beings, and content dooms them to eternal ignorance and pauperism. A little coarse, common labor will procure for them the merest necessaries of life, and that is all they care or hope for. Not one in a thousand will undergo the labor of mind and body requisite to make them good mechanics, or artists, or scholars, or professional men. Invested with equal political rights, as the negroes soon will be, a very few of them will acquire property, become educated, and occupy respectable social positions. The great mass of them will continue to be a useful, robust, and productive laboring class much better situated in all respects, however, than the negroes of Africa or the Indians of America.

The whites are ever *discontented*, rivalrous, emulative, rapacious, ambitious, proud, provident, selfish, jealous, aspiring, and accumulative. The most ambitious, powerful, and rapacious from time immemorial have monopolized the lands, and compelled, by virtue of the dominion of land monopoly, the landless to labor for them. The wages of the laboring classes have ever been proportioned to the industry, skill, and inventiveness exhibited by each individual laborer; and this graduated apportionment, acting upon the moral qualities of the whites, such as we have just enumerated, has stimulated them to untiring industry, skill, and inventiveness, and thus sustained a continually-improving and progressive civilization. The civilized races are decidedly unamiable, and if they were not so would cease to be civilized. Yet we do not think that man is endowed by Nature with any evil moral qualities, provided such qualities are not indulged in to excess. Discontent is a virtue while it only serves to make us moderately industrious, provident, and accumulative: content becomes a vice when it begets indolence and improvidence. The white becomes vicious and criminal only when he indulges to excess such passions and propensities as we have mentioned, and this he is sure to do if not restrained by law, public opinion, and (at least) respect for the teachings of Christian morality. The native African is by far the most amiable of human beings when the harvest is just in and game abundant. As such, Homer described him almost three thousand years ago, and as such is he described by all the African travellers of our day. The native Africans brought to this country as slaves were

simple, guileless, affectionate, obedient, and industrious: their descendants have contracted many of the faults of the whites, without acquiring any of their good qualities. But even now the negro is a much more amiable being than the white man: and the great question to be solved by the friends of humanity is, Can so amiable a being long live when thrown into free competition with the unamiable white man? The negro is eminently contented, unselfish, improvident, generous, wasteful, unambitious, unaspiring --- ready to divide the little he may have with the first comer, and hence incapable of acquiring, holding, or wielding capital or property. In time, all the uncivilized races are, ever have been, and, left to themselves, ever will be, communists. Private property is an institution almost unknown among them, and equally unknown to them are all other institutions of civilized society. They have no laws, no courts, no judges, no legislators, no executive officers; in time, no government, for their chiefs or kings only lend them in war or on forays, and when these are over all government ceases. It is force of nature, not want of education, that makes the uncivilized races communists, agrarians, paupers, and anarchists.

The question recurs, How will such people get along when made the political and legal equals of the whites, and thrown into free competition with them? Very well, indeed, we think, in the South. In that climate they are more efficient field hands than the whites, can rent land as cheaply as the whites, and for much less than the whites have to pay for them in rent elsewhere. As common laborers they receive the same wages as whites. Their wants are fewer and less than those of the whites, for they care not for fashion or appearance, and their earnings while they work are equally great. They have worked well in the section where I live, have plenty of money, spend it profusely, live wastefully, and are sometimes, from sheer improvidence, a little pinched for the necessaries of life. They are quite as respectful, kind, and obliging as when they were our slaves. That scarecrow, hostility of race, ceases to exist when an inferior race, invested with equal legal and political rights, is blended in one common mass with a superior race. Society soon subsides and stratifies; the inferior being becomes a contented laborer, and the superior a kind of protecting employer. The white laborer frets under his galling chains sometimes, because he feels himself naturally the equal of his employer, but finds himself, in social position, far beneath him. It will be the fault of the whites in the South if we do not have the most contented laborers to be found in the world. We should cherish and protect them, for we can get none other. White men will not and should not come South to work as hirelings beside negroes.

Workingmen from the North are fast settling among us, but they come to tend their own fields, not to hire themselves out as farm-hands, by the year or by the month. It in this immigration that will soon restore the South, if the negroes will but continue to perform their part as well as they are now performing it.