

THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL REVIEW

VOLUME XXIX

OCTOBER, 1952

NUMBER 4

CONTENTS

- ✓ WALTER HINES PAGE AND THE SPIRIT OF
THE NEW SOUTH..... 481
CHARLES GRIER SELLERS, JR.
- CALVIN H. WILEY'S NORTH CAROLINA READER 500
HOWARD BRAVERMAN
- THE LAND VALUATIONS OF IREDELL COUNTY
IN 1800..... 523
HUGH HILL WOOTEN
- PAMELA SAVAGE OF CHAMPLAIN,
HEALTH SEEKER IN OXFORD 540
HELEN HARRIET SALLS
- LETTERS FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO ANDREW
JOHNSON 569
ELIZABETH GREGORY MCPHERSON
- BOOK REVIEWS 579
GRIFFIN'S *History of Rutherford County, 1937-1951*—
BY PERCIVAL PERRY; MCCOY'S *The First Presbyterian
Church, Asheville, N. C., 1794-1951*—BY GEORGE W.
PASCHAL; WOODY'S *The Papers and Addresses of Wil-
liam Preston Few: Late President of Duke University*—
BY DAVID A. LOCKMILLER; STICK'S *Graveyard of the
Atlantic: Shipwrecks of the North Carolina Coast*—
BY ROBERT H. WOODY; WILLISON'S *Behold Virginia!
The Fifth Crown*—BY WILLIAM S. POWELL; CHES-
NUTT'S *Charles Waddell Chesnut: Pioneer of the Color
Line*—BY LOUISE GREER; MONTGOMERY'S *Cracker
Parties*—BY GLENN W. RAINEY; MANGUM'S *The Legal
Status of the Tenant Farmer in the Southeast*—BY
FANNIE MEMORY FARMER.
- HISTORICAL NEWS 590

Entered as second-class matter September 29, 1928, at the Post Office at
Raleigh, North Carolina, under the act of March 3, 1879.

THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL REVIEW

VOLUME XXIX

OCTOBER, 1952

NUMBER 4

WALTER HINES PAGE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW SOUTH

BY CHARLES GRIER SELLERS, JR.

Appomattox marked the national triumph of an aggressive capitalism over the agrarian economy of an older America. South of the Potomac scores of leaders of the Confederacy itself set to work to make over the conquered land in the image of the victorious North. But apathy, inertia, and the ghosts of the past fought as stiff a rear guard action against the forces of the future as had the armies of Lee. Commercial and industrial in its essence, the New South program called to its aid not only men like Joseph E. Brown and James B. Duke, but also a corps of younger men. Rebelling against the nostalgia and complacency of the 1870's and 1880's, these younger men were often patriots and idealists; they added to the campaign for industrialization proposals for public schools, improved agriculture, and betterment of the Negro's lot. One of the most effective members of this group was Walter Hines Page, whose role as a prophet of the New South has been overshadowed by his more conspicuous service as American ambassador in London during World War I.

The Pages had not sympathized with the exaggerated sectionalism of the prewar South. Walter's grandfather, Anderson Page, a member of North Carolina's unpretentious small planter class, had shaped his thinking before Jeffersonian liberalism was blighted by slavery and intersectional strife. The spirit of these earlier days was eagerly absorbed by young Walter during frequent visits to the "Old Place." To Nicholas Worth, hero of Page's semi-autobiographical novel, *The Southerner*, "the Old Place was the background of my life, therefore, a sort of home back of my home."¹ Nor did Walter's father, Allison F. Page, look

¹Nicholas Worth [pseud., Walter H. Page], *The Southerner* (New York, 1909), 25.

back fondly to the days before the war; he had denounced secession as "the most foolhardy enterprise that man ever undertook."² After the war he laid off a town, established an academy, built cotton and tobacco factories and a railroad, and began the development of the North Carolina sandhills region.³

Walter Page's experiences as a young man produced in him a nationalism as strong as the unionism of his father and grandfather. Most of his formal education was in southern schools—the celebrated Bingham School at Mebane, North Carolina, tiny Trinity College, and Randolph-Macon College. His fine work in Greek at Randolph-Macon brought him a momentous opportunity upon his graduation in 1876. He was selected as one of the first twenty fellows of Johns Hopkins University, then beginning the unique program of graduate study which had such a profound effect on American scholarship. The broadening influence of Page's association at Hopkins with an unusually gifted group from all parts of the country is suggested by Nicholas Worth's description of his parallel experience at Harvard:

But what an emancipation I owed to that candid and straight habit of thought and life which had no intellectual punishment for those who differed with it, at least on the subjects about which I was then especially concerned.

I even now recall with gratitude the freedom that I felt. . . .⁴

Page was born to preach—whether his forum were pulpit, lecture room, or editorial column—and his favorite target was the South. His earliest exhortation came at the end of his first year at Hopkins, when, in the course of a pilgrimage to the great German universities, he addressed a long letter to *The Observer* (Raleigh, North Carolina). By now a bit of an intellectual snob, he complained mainly of the narrowness of the South. The most important lesson for southerners to learn was "the lesson of scholarship, the lesson of education, the lesson of culture."⁵ His mind was already turning to practical measures, and his letter hailed "the coming of an earnest interest in our educational matters," as "an expression of the spirit of the old days in its

² Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (3 vols. Garden City, 1922-1925), I, 5.

³ J. N. Cole, "Allison Francis Page," in Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present* (8 vols. Greensboro, 1905-1917), III, 308.

⁴ Worth, *The Southerner*, 96.

⁵ Burton J. Hendrick, *The Training of an American: The Earlier Life and Letters of Walter H. Page, 1855-1915* (Boston, 1928), 93.

second coming." But he attached a fundamental condition to this appeal to the spirit of the Old Place, the spirit of Calvin Wiley and Archibald Murphey.

For it is after all only the spirit of the old time that we must retain. . . . we can afford, and must afford, for the methods of our fathers to die with the age they served. For we need newer and later for our newer and later life. Thus alone can we make advances.⁶

Before his second year at Hopkins was out, Page tired of literary scholarship, resigned his fellowship, and returned home. The next few years saw him struggling to find a proper field for his hortatory talents—he even considered the Unitarian ministry for a time.⁷ But he finally settled on teaching. His failure to obtain a permanent position at the University of North Carolina rankled deeply. "I shall some day," he wrote, "buy a home where I was not allowed to work for one, and be laid away in the soil that I love. I wanted to work for the old state; it had no need for it, it seems."⁸ After a year's teaching in a Louisville, Kentucky, high school and an abortive attempt to launch a magazine, he turned to journalism and obtained a place on the *St. Joseph Gazette* (Missouri).

It was in this period that Page wrote for *The Atlantic Monthly* his first formal critique of southern society, a "Study of an Old Southern Borough."⁹ In this picture of the complacent squalor of the southern small town, there appears the gentleman of the old school, reading eighteenth-century literature and talking interminably, often as not about the theory of secession. Here is the great host of idle and unambitious storekeepers. They are proud of the borough as it is; "they are the hardest men in the world to move to put forth an effort, even for their own improvement." Here is the energetic lad being driven from home by "the mental stagnation of his surroundings." And here also is another figure—along with the educator to be Page's premier saviour of the South—the enterprising man of business. He has "a fresher

⁶ *Observer* (Raleigh), October 27, 1877.

⁷ Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 128-129.

⁸ Hendrick, *Life and Letters*, I, 31.

⁹ Walter H. Page, "Study of an Old Southern Borough," in *Atlantic Monthly*, XLVII (May, 1881), 648-658.

tone of voice, a more energetic step, a readier wit for a bargain, than any other man in the borough." "If we had men of capital to build here," he says.

. . . we could grow to be of some commercial importance. Here is waterpower enough to spin and weave all the cotton grown in the State, and the facilities for shipping would enable us to become a great manufacturing people. . . . We need a more spirited public—more push. Indeed, the very worst lingering effect of the war upon our society is this narrow way of looking upon the State's advancement and this immovable prejudice in favor of old institutions.

Page's article had no sooner appeared than he resigned his Missouri position and set out on a tour of the South, writing a series of letters for the *World* (New York) and other papers. He again elaborated his criticisms of the old southern borough, but he also reported many signs that the past was being forgotten and that a new spirit was stirring.¹⁰ On the strength of these articles, Page secured a job with the *World*. Here he moved more than ever before in a national setting. After less than two years, however, he resigned with the rest of the editorial staff when Joseph Pulitzer took over the paper. With a broad journalistic experience behind him, he felt again the desire to return and serve the old commonwealth; and the best organ for his message would be a newspaper in the state capital.

Purchasing the weekly *State Chronicle* at Raleigh in 1883, Page took up the new enterprise with energy and ability. The forceful make-up he adopted and his terse, lively, hard-hitting style quickly placed the *Chronicle* in happy contrast with the dreary productions of his competitors. It was characteristic of the man that he substituted the third person for the pompous editorial "we." But the content and spirit of the paper were its most striking qualities. Page spent much of his time traveling up and down North Carolina looking for indications of enterprise, and he filled his columns with enthusiastic descriptions of whatever educational or industrial activity he could find. Every issue described the stirrings of progress in two different towns of the state.

¹⁰ These articles are reprinted in Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 137-154.

Page's editorials featured constructive plans for developing North Carolina. The new editor was barely embarked before he suggested holding a Raleigh Exposition, modeled on the Atlanta Exposition; his ninth issue was able to report that Raleigh businessmen and other groups over the state had rallied to the idea, and the exposition was held successfully in the fall of 1884.¹¹ Page stressed again and again the need for public schools.¹² Businessmen were praised at every opportunity; for example, "the builders of railroads are now without exception the most important developers of North Carolina."¹³ Through it all runs the challenge to be up and doing. "The work we have to do in North Carolina now is to improve our farms, to build up our waste places, and to turn our manifold natural wealth into articles of use. We need money and muscle more than we need anything else."¹⁴

The special tobacco number deserves particular mention. It boasted of being the largest paper and the largest edition—25,000 copies—ever published in the state. General accounts of the tobacco industry, pictures of tobacco factories, maps, charts, statistics, and descriptions of the principal producing and processing towns, counties, and companies went to make up an impressive brochure. One of the themes of the issue was splashed in bold letters across the bottom of one page: "*The Health of our Dukes—When our old Civilization was Rolled up by War as a Scroll and Filed away, They and such as They by their Industry and Daring made on our Empoverished Soil a Richer Civilization than the Old Times Knew.*" And in the editorial appeared the perennial Page optimism: "We are all in a new humor in North Carolina. We propose to make things go."¹⁵

Page wisely refrained from stepping on too many toes in print. He joined vigorously in the local game of Republican baiting. When the state Democratic convention met in 1884, he contented himself with suggesting that a well-trained man be nominated for superintendent of public instruction and then endorsed the entire party ticket without qualification. Nowhere in the surviving copies for these years are to be found the direct attacks

¹¹ *State Chronicle* (Raleigh), November 10, 1883.

¹² *State Chronicle*, November 17, 1883; June 7, 1884.

¹³ *State Chronicle*, June 23, 1884.

¹⁴ *State Chronicle*, November 10, 1883.

¹⁵ *State Chronicle*, May 31, 1884.

on state officials which appear under the later editorship of Josephus Daniels.¹⁶ But tact on the printed page did not guarantee harmony with the Confederate veterans who ruled Raleigh society and North Carolina politics. It is all too likely that they were annoyed by Page's impatience for change and his fondness for the clever but cutting phrase. A key to the real situation may be found in Nicholas Worth's experience in Marlborough, a thinly disguised Raleigh.

In men's society in Marlborough, a freedom was granted that was never allowed at the fireside or in public. I could talk in private with Senator Barker himself about Jefferson Davis or about educating the Negro. He was tolerant of all private opinions, privately expressed among men only. But the moment that an objectionable opinion was put forth publicly or in the presence of women or to Negroes, that was another matter. Then it touched our Sacred Dead, our Hearthstones, etc., etc. . . . For these men who ruled by the ghost called Public Opinion held the country and all the people back almost in the same economic and social state in which slavery had left them. There was no hope for the future under their domination.¹⁷

At any rate, Page was dissatisfied. In order to extend his influence, he converted the *Chronicle* into a daily, but was soon having a desperate time financially. Finally, in the winter of 1884-1885, he made a last effort to keep the paper going by trying to get the state printing. But as another Tarheel editor reported, "Page was no politician, not even a general mixer, and did not win."¹⁸ Forced back onto a weekly basis and thoroughly discouraged, Page in February, 1885, abandoned his final attempt to make a way for himself in the old commonwealth and returned to the North.

Back in New York, Page joined the staff of the *Brooklyn Union*. But he by no means forgot North Carolina. In October, 1885, the *Chronicle*, which had been taken over by Page's friend, Josephus Daniels, began to publish a series of weekly Page letters. The early numbers dealt mainly with national affairs, especially civil service reform, but occasional barbed para-

¹⁶ *State Chronicle*, November 10, 1883; June 14, 28, 1884. No considerable file of the *Chronicle* for the period of Page's editorship has been located. Scattered issues are to be found in the Library of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and in the North Carolina State Library, Raleigh.

¹⁷ Worth, *The Southerner*, 314-315.

¹⁸ Josephus Daniels, *Tar Heel Editor* (Chapel Hill, 1939), 96.

graphs¹⁹ presaged a major assault on the backwardness of the Old North State. Early in February, 1886, appeared the first of the celebrated "Mummy Letters."

It is an awfully discouraging business to undertake to prove to a Mummy that it is a Mummy. You go up to it and say, "Old Fellow, the Egyptian dynasties crumbled several thousand years ago; you are a fish out of water. . . ." The old thing grins that grin which death put on its solemn features when the world was young; and your task is so pitiful that even the humour of it is gone.

Give it up! It can't be done. . . . They don't want an industrial school. That means a new idea and a new idea is death to the supremacy of the Mummies. . . . There is not a man whose residence is in the State who is recognized by the world as an authority on anything. Since time began, no man or no woman who lived there has ever written a book that has taken a place in the permanent literature of the country. Not a man ever lived and worked there who fills twenty-five words in any history of the United States. Not a scientific discovery has been made and worked out and kept its home in North Carolina that has ever become famous for the good it did the world. It is the laughing stock among the States. . . .

The most of the active and useful and energetic men born in North Carolina have gone away. . . . Even with our material advancement of late years, there is no appreciation of scholarship, no chance for intellectual growth. . . . When every effort to broaden the people into a great commonwealth that shall lead in the Union—every movement—is balked by the dead weight of these provincial and ignorant men, who are suffered to rule by heredity and by their general respectability in private life—there is absolutely no chance for ambitious men of ability, proportionate to their ability. We say easily that it is the fault of the times, of circumstances. It is the fault of the insufferable narrowness and mediocrity that balks everything. . . .

It is the Mummies. And the Mummies have the directing of things. . . . Yet when a man tells the plain truth because he loves North Carolina, the same fellows yell, "Traitor!". . . . The misfortune is, nobody questions their right. Of the thousands of men who know I am writing the truth, not one in ten will say so publicly. . . . Men in North Carolina do not speak what they think, but submit (as no other people have ever submitted) to the guidance of the dead. I hold this to be cowardly. I think the time has come for getting at the truth, for independent action, for a declaration of independence from the tyranny of hindering traditions. In God's name, with such a State, filled with such people, with such opportunities, are we to sit down quietly forever and allow every enterprise that means growth, every idea that means

¹⁹ See especially Page's letters in the *State Chronicle* for October 6, November 6, 26, December 3, 1885; January 28, 1886.

intellectual freedom, to perish, and the State to lag behind always, because a few Mummies will be offended? It would be cheaper to pension them all, than longer to listen to them.²⁰

The letter stirred up a storm in the state, with seven or eight newspapers criticizing the *Chronicle* for publishing it and with Daniels urging a fair hearing for his correspondent and partly agreeing with him. The controversy—with replies and further charges by Page, editorials by Daniels, and contributions, pro, con, and neutral—filled the pages of the *Chronicle* for many weeks. Page's last blast appeared April 22, though his letters on national affairs continued to run until October.²¹ Intemperate as it was, Page's attack probably made few converts to his cause. But his bold words found a ready response in the minds of the rising generation of builders of a new North Carolina. A young Goldsboro lawyer, Charles B. Aycock, wrote to Page that "fully three fourths of the people are with you and wish you God speed in your effort to arouse better work, greater thought and activity, and freer opinions in the State."²²

All the while, Page was busily engaged in newspaper work in New York. After two years on the *Brooklyn Union* and a short period on the *New York Post*, he entered the magazine field, becoming business manager of *Forum*. It was in this area that he was to have his greatest success, and his progress was rapid. Within four years he was promoted to the editorship of *Forum*, and he quickly made that moribund journal the most widely circulated magazine of its kind. Following a dispute with the owners over the magazine's control, he went in 1895 to the Houghton Mifflin Company of Boston as literary adviser; within two years he was associate editor of their *Atlantic Monthly* and a year later he became sole editor. But in 1899, determined to have a magazine of his own, he resigned from the *Atlantic* and joined with Frank N. Doubleday to found the publishing house of Doubleday, Page and Company. In November, 1900, appeared the first number of *World's Work*, which, under Page's editorship, rapidly gained a wide circulation. It was to be his personal organ until his departure for Great Britain in 1913.

²⁰ *State Chronicle*, February 4, 1886.

²¹ *State Chronicle*, February 11-April 22, 1886.

²² Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 182.

Despite the great activity and success of these years, the problems of his native South continued to absorb much of Page's thought and energy. In addresses, articles, books, and the columns of his magazines, he continued to pound away at all the things which hindered southern progress. But his criticisms underwent a change. As he got farther away from the personal disappointments of the earlier years, his strictures came to be merely incidental to sound proposals for remedying southern ills. It was a wiser Page who wrote in 1902:

After many impatient efforts we should learn the wisdom of trying to find out their point of view and of contenting ourselves with seeing them advance in their own way, even if they came slowly and seemed stupid. Teaching one's ancestors is at best a difficult undertaking; for it is not the same task as teaching one's descendants. What a lot of disappointing effort this generation might have been saved if it had known this simple truth somewhat sooner.²³

As his emphasis shifted the South itself began to put a different valuation on his message. When Page gave his memorable "Forgotten Man" address at the North Carolina Normal School in 1897, the speech was applauded by the state's leading newspapers, the *Charlotte Observer* saying:

Mr. Walter Page spoke the truth very bluntly about us all; it hurt and we squealed. But we believe that he had then and has now the true interests of North Carolina deeply at heart. We are used to praise, and to adulation. We need sometimes to be reminded with plain speaking of our faults.²⁴

What, then, were Page's prescriptions for the South? His philosophy of southern progress centered around "two great constructive forces." The first was industry, which had "already given the essential power over to a class of men that bring mobility to social life and opportunity to them that can take it."²⁵ Men of affairs were better able than anyone else to overcome the Mummies. "Commerce," Page pointed out, "has no social illusions; it has the knack of rooting up vested social interests that

²³ Walter H. Page, "The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths," in *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXXIX (May, 1902), 651.

²⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 22, 1933, quoting *Charlotte Observer*, May 19, 1897.

²⁵ Page, "The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths," 659.

stand in its way."²⁶ All of this was, of course, in addition to the fundamental fact that only through industrialization could the South make the most of its natural and human resources.

Page's second great regenerative force was universal public education, which he championed not only on the basis of democracy but also from practical considerations. "The doctrine of equality of opportunity," he wrote, "is at the bottom of social progress, for you can never judge a man's capacity except as he has opportunity to develop it."²⁷ It was with this in mind that he so often spoke of education as "training." Right training is that which increases people's earnings. The result is a prosperous community, and this, he asserted, makes for real democracy.²⁸ Page's ideal school, by training both people's hands and their minds, "simply opens to them all the intellectual life and the way to useful occupations at the same time."²⁹ Page insisted that even the most stubborn southern problems would disappear in the face of educational progress. Education in the South is, therefore,

something more than the teaching of youth; it is the building of a great new social order. The far-reaching quality of the work that the energetic educators of the South are doing lifts them out of the ranks of the mere schoolmasters and puts them on the level of constructive statesmen.³⁰

Fortified by his faith in industry and education, Page faced the problems of the Negro's place in southern life with great optimism. He based his attitude on sound democratic doctrine, writing that "in any proper scheme of education, there are no white men, no black men—only men."³¹ In the same vein he once chided Edwin A. Alderman and Charles D. McIver for their southern prejudice in refusing to have lunch with Booker T. Washington and another Negro.³² He was thoroughly opposed to Negro disfranchisement, though he advised his northern readers that the South could not be forced to let the Negro vote, by ruling of the Supreme Court or by any other means.³³ Believing as he

²⁶ Walter H. Page, "The Last Hold of the Southern Bully," in *Forum*, XVI (November, 1898), 313-314.

²⁷ Walter H. Page, *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths: Being Essays Towards the Training of the Forgotten Men in the Southern States* (New York, 1902), 4.

²⁸ Walter H. Page, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," in *Proceedings of the Conference for Education in the South, 7th Session* (New York, 1904), 101-103.

²⁹ Page, *Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths*, 80-82.

³⁰ Page, *Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths*, 150.

³¹ Worth, *The Southerner*, 385.

³² Daniels, *Tar Heel Editor*, 258.

³³ W. H. Page, "How Negro Disfranchisement Has Worked," in *World's Work*, I (February, 1901), 361-362; W. H. Page, "The Supreme Court and Negro Suffrage," in *World's Work*, VI (1902), 3491-3492.

did in education and work as regenerative social forces, it is not surprising to find that he was a warm supporter of Booker T. Washington's program for the Negro. He approved Washington's statement that "in the final test the success of our race will be proportionate to the service that it renders the world,"³⁴ and agreed with him that the job was one of both industrial education and character building.³⁵ These measures, he thought, would take care of the situation. "What you mean by the race problem," he said, "is, we hope, a temporary trouble. . . . It is all a matter of right training."³⁶ And yet, at other times, he showed real insight into the depths of the problem of race, as when he recorded Nicholas Worth's shock at the movement for Negro disfranchisement.

A large part of the Southern people had persuaded themselves that the Negro must be kept to a level reminiscent of slavery, forgetting that on this level he can be only a burden. . . . Yet, clear as this conclusion is, when it is reasoned out, what are we to expect of the emotional qualities of Southern life? Have slavery and the presence of the Negro caused a permanent loss of white character in the South, so that fear rules where reason ought to sit?³⁷

Nationalist that he was, Page hoped the South might one day resume the place in national political life that it had held in the early years of the republic. With the advent of Bryan, he had deserted the Democrats, and he regretted that "the best character and thought of the South should find political expression through neither party."³⁸ Urging "Southern men of character" to organize a movement "for sound money and national honor,"³⁹ he looked forward to a revival of Republicanism and the two-party system. The address in which President-elect Taft promised to follow a conciliatory course toward the South was delivered to the North Carolina Society of New York and followed a speech by Page in which he asserted that "we [North Carolinians] rush in where Texas and Virginia fear to tread, and we shall welcome the impending and inevitable breaking of the Solid South (perhaps we

³⁴ W. H. Page, "Lincoln and the Negro," in *World's Work*, XVII (April, 1909), 11, 420.

³⁵ Walter H. Page, "Mr. Washington's Book," in *Book Buyer*, XX (March, 1900), 144-145.

³⁶ Worth, *The Southerner*, 835.

³⁷ Nicholas Worth [pseud., Walter H. Page], "The Autobiography of a Southerner since the Civil War," in *Atlantic Monthly*, XCVIII (October, 1906), 436.

³⁸ Walter H. Page, "Is the Solid South Passing?" in *World's Work*, XVII (January, 1909), 11, 076.

³⁹ Walter H. Page, "New Political Sentiment in the South," in *World's Work*, I (December, 1901), 134-135.

to the
old the

public
democ-
ine of
social
t as he
hat he
is that
perous
racy.²⁸

l their
nd the
ed that
in the
efore,

ling of
e work
em out
e level

e faced
a great
ctrine,
are no
e once
r their
ker T.
osed to
readers
ruling
g as he

November,
wards the
ie Confer-

c. I (Feb-
in *World's*

shall lead it)."⁴⁰ And President Taft's announcement that he would appoint the best men, regardless of party, to offices in the South, followed hard on repeated Page editorials urging this policy.⁴¹ But both Page and the President were doomed to disappointment, for "respectable" Republicanism proved to be hardly more virile than the old-fashioned kind.

Walter Page was important to the New South for more than his ideas. He was, first of all, an assiduous propagandist. During his *Chronicle* days he claimed that he had

written and caused to be published in the influential Northern press more about North Carolina, its Democratic policies, its vast resources and opportunities, than any other journalist in the State. *The Chronicle* was the first journal to devote its columns and energies to a strong effort to make known to our own people their opportunities and to stimulate industrial development. It has within the year-and-a-half of its existence published more descriptions of more towns and counties and industries than any other journal; and it set the example and turned journalism in this very useful direction.⁴²

His magazine career offered him infinitely wider opportunities to publicize the South and its needs. The approximately fifty issues of *Forum* under his editorship contained thirteen articles on the South. When he took over the *Atlantic Monthly*, he gave a truly national outlook to that rather provincial New England journal, including in the twenty-one numbers he edited eight articles on southern subjects alone.

It was not until Page got a magazine of his own, however, that he gave free rein to his interest in the old commonwealths. Eighty-two articles concerning the South were published in the 151 issues of *World's Work* which appeared while he was editor, 1900-1913. Twenty-two were on the Negro, 14 on agriculture, 8 on Southern progress generally, 6 on education, 4 on business and industry, 2 each on hookworm, immigration, and general health conditions, and 1 each on child labor, conservation, Tillman, the Georgia convict system, southern mountaineers, and many other subjects. As to authors, Page wrote 13 of the articles, Booker T. Washington 12, Clarence Poe 4, Edwin Mims 4, W. E. B.

⁴⁰ Walter H. Page, "Breaking the Solid South," in *Outlook*, XV (December, 1908), 874.

⁴¹ Page, "Is the Solid South Passing?" 11,076; W. H. Page, "Breaking the Solid South by Better Appointments," in *World's Work*, XVII (April, 1909), 11,412; W. H. Page, "An Era of Good Feeling," in *World's Work*, XVIII (July, 1909), 11,783.

⁴² *Daily Chronicle*, January 10, 1885.

DuBois 3, Robert R. Moton 3, and E. C. Branson 2, while among those with a single article were Joel Chandler Harris, Seaman A. Knapp, Edwin A. Alderman, D. A. Tompkins, and W. W. Finley. Page habitually solicited articles on particular subjects from the persons he thought could do them best, so this compilation reflects his own view of which topics and writers were most significant. But even more important were Page's 141 editorials on southern matters. The South also provided subjects for brief Page articles in such regular departments of the magazine as "The March of the Cities," "Little Stories of Men in Action," "Among the World's Workers," and "Forward to the Land."

Page was likewise trying to use his position as publisher to awaken interest in southern problems. To his friend, Edwin Mims, he wrote:

. . . I wish to get reduced to some specific shape, if it is possible and if the time be ripe, both magazine matter and books—especially books—which shall be written with such fervor and at such an angle to life as will hasten the broadening of Southern development. . . .⁴³

It is probable that in the period of Page's activity Doubleday, Page, and Company issued more books by southerners and more books about the South than any other publishing house. Their authors ranged from Booker T. Washington, through Sidney Lanier and Ellen Glasgow, to Thomas Dixon, whose vicious novels Edwin Mims says were published because of Page's belief in unlimited freedom of opinion.⁴⁴

Page was more than an able propagandist. As early as his Raleigh sojourn, he had an active hand in particular projects for southern progress. It was at Page's instance that a number of young men in the capital formed a "Social Science Club." This organization soon became the famous Watauga Club and included in its membership at various times such men as Charles W. Dabney, Walter Clark, Josephus Daniels, E. C. Branson, and Clarence Poe. The group early came to the conclusion that the state's most pressing need was for an industrial school. On Page's motion it was decided to petition the legislature on the subject, and he was on the committee of three which prepared and pre-

⁴³ Edwin Mims, "Walter Hines Page: Friend of the South," in *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XVIII (April, 1919), 105.

⁴⁴ Mims, "Walter Hines Page: Friend of the South," 105.

sented the petition. The legislature approved the idea, provided someone would give the land and part of the money needed. Page left the state about this time, but continued to urge the club by letter to push the project. It was as a result of this movement that North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (now North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering) was finally established.⁴⁵

Page's most important work for the South was done in the field of public education. His "Forgotten Man" speech at Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1897 created a sensation and made him one of the chief prophets in the movement for public schools in the South. He was a leader in the so-called Ogden Movement. A vice president of the fourth annual Conference for Education in the South, in 1901, he was also on the resolutions committee whose report instructed President Robert C. Ogden to appoint an executive committee. Page consulted with Ogden as to the membership of the committee and was himself named to it. It was this executive committee which became the Southern Education Board. The importance of the Board's work in bringing together earnest educational workers North and South, providing encouragement for the educational forces of the South, and mobilizing public opinion in the far-reaching campaign for public schools can hardly be overestimated.⁴⁶

During its first year the Southern Education Board appointed Page and four others as a committee to consider the problem of raising money for southern schools. As a result of the activities of this committee and the interest of John D. Rockefeller, the General Education Board was organized in 1902, with Page as one of its charter members. Rockefeller gave the new board one million dollars in its first year and followed this gift with many more millions as the work of the Board expanded. Both the Southern Board and the General Education Board were composed of southerners and northerners alike. Page and several others were members of each, so that the two worked closely together and were a powerful force for southern educational improvement. As a key leader in the school campaign, Page also became

⁴⁵ Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 169-170, 173; Charles William Dabney, *Universal Education in the South* (2 vols. Chapel Hill, 1936), I, 186; Daniels, *Tar Heel Editor*, 296.

⁴⁶ Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, II, 32-73.

and the idea, provided money needed. Page urged the club by letter of this movement at the Southern Educational College (now Southern College of Business and Engineering)

which was done in the "Ogden" speech at Greensboro, North Carolina, and made him a member of the Board of the Ogden Movement. A committee for Education Solutions was appointed with Ogden as to the self named to it. It was the Southern Educational work in bringing the South, providing a campaign for

The Board appointed to consider the problem of the activities of Rockefeller, the Ogden, with Page as the new board one was gift with many handed. Both the board were composed of several others closely together for educational improvement. Page also became

William Dabney, *Universal Education*, 295.

a member of two other important agencies for education in the South, the boards of the Jeanes and Slater funds.⁴⁷

Nor was Page a merely nominal member of these organizations. Some idea of his activity is revealed by a memorandum he sent in 1902 to Dr. Wallace Buttrick of the General Education Board.

I send you this while I think of it—for no use but only for your personal information, if it should at any time, or in any way, turn out that I can serve the Board on any of these trips, or through any of these channels, by getting specific information, or by doing anything else.

June 13th—I shall address the North Carolina Teachers' Association at Wrightsville, on Education Towards Freedom of Speech. . . .

On June 17th I am going to deliver the Commencement Address at the Jacob Tome Institute at Fort Deposit, Maryland.

Later (in July) I am going to Dabney's summer school at Knoxville to speak about a week. . . . I shall soon have off the press a little volume of addresses and magazine articles by me, called "The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths." . . . This is printed at my own expense to give away to anybody who will read it.

I shall publish indefinitely in almost every number of the *World's Work* editorials and articles along the same lines, suggestions for which will be thankfully received.

The *Outlook* in the fall will begin a series of twelve or more articles by me on the general Southern situation, wherein I shall follow out in detail my article that will soon appear in the *Atlantic Monthly* on *The Development of Democracy* (not political, of course) *in the Old Southern States*.

I sometimes snap the Sunday ministrations of Dr. Rainsford and write editorials on our subject for *The Outlook* or *The Times* or other papers; and I am under promise to write for the *Boston Transcript*, the *Kansas City Journal*, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, and the *Chicago Record-Journal* a number of articles on the same general subject.

Everybody's Magazine is edited in our office and I shall follow my recent sketch of Booker T. Washington with some similar matter later.

I shall write in the summer another article for the *Atlantic Monthly* on *The Political Side of Southern Education*.

So that whatever I can write, wherever I can get in a word, or wherever at any time I can go and do anything for the cause—these are my tools and channels and ways of doing it; and I am at the service of the Board for field-work, pen-work, or tongue-work—all, of course, and always at my own expense.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, II, 123-135, 243.

⁴⁸ Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 407-408.

And this was an outline of the work for but part of a single year. "In my judgment," President Ogden once wrote to Page, "you are furnishing a large proportion of the brains of the campaign."⁴⁹ And a southern worker in the campaign has reported that his collaborators all felt that "the work in its fullest scope would have been impossible but for the influence, moral and financial, which Walter Page was largely responsible in bringing to their support."⁵⁰

As the southern states themselves began to provide for their school systems more adequately, the General Education Board shifted its attention to other phases of southern development. Dr. Wallace Buttrick, who was convinced that economic conditions lay at the root of southern backwardness, became interested in the farm demonstration program being developed in Texas by the then unknown Seaman A. Knapp. In 1906 Buttrick brought Knapp to New York and introduced him to Page. Page was immediately enthusiastic, and the two became close friends. At the urging of Page and Buttrick, the General Education Board worked out a coöperative arrangement with the Department of Agriculture for extending Knapp's work. Altogether, the Board spent over a million dollars on the project. To Page, therefore, belongs some of the credit for the inauguration of today's vast farm extension program.⁵¹

Another avenue of service to the South was opened for Page in 1908, when, as a member of President Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, he became acquainted with Dr. Charles W. Stiles. Stiles had become convinced that much of the anaemia and shiftlessness which prevailed among the poorer white people of the South was due to hookworm, a disease then little understood in the United States. He had been unable to convince anyone of the validity of his discovery, but Page was much impressed with his story. When Stiles told him that a gentleman who had promised to finance a campaign against hookworm had died inopportunely, Page replied, "Well, don't get discouraged. Perhaps we can get some money from some other sources."⁵² Through Buttrick, Page interested Dr. Frederick Gates, Rockefeller's ad-

⁴⁹ Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 413.

⁵⁰ R. D. W. Connor, "Walter Hines Page: A Southern Nationalist," in *The Journal of Social Forces*, II (January, 1924), 164.

⁵¹ Hendrick, *Life and Letters*, I, 96-97; Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, II, 185-186, 244; Mims, "Walter Hines Page: Friend of the South," 114.

⁵² Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, II, 252.

viser on philanthropies, and a meeting with the Southern Board was arranged to sound southern opinion on the subject. The outcome of this conference was the organization of the Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm, with Page as a member and with a million-dollar grant from Rockefeller. The campaign undertaken by the Commission revealed the startling prevalence of the disease and virtually eliminated it. Out of the Commission grew the International Health Board, which carried on similar campaigns against malaria and pellagra in the South and, with additional Rockefeller funds, inaugurated the most extensive international health program in history.⁵³

The changes which took place in the South during the years of Page's activity are difficult to measure with precision. But from the vantage point of four decades later, one is inclined to endorse the exuberant progress report he made in 1907:

There is no longer any Southern problem of the old sort. Problems there are, and enough of them. But the discouraging old Southern depression and aloofness are gone. It is a different people. And I am astonished to find that the very programme that I laid down in the *Chronicle* in Raleigh twenty years ago is the programme that has brought this change not only in the condition but in the very character of the people.⁵⁴

Much did remain to be done. But the New South had conquered the Old South in the minds of the people. And in effecting this essential revolution, Walter Page had borne an honorable part.

Page's social philosophy was fundamentally Jeffersonian, with a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity. Yet he was sometimes strikingly blind to the implications of democracy. His faith in the capitalist as southern reformer and his long association with some of the most generous and public-spirited members of the northern business community made it hard for him to see economic injustices which stood in the way of an equal chance for all. As editor of the *Chronicle* he had commented complacently on a cotton mill where "little girls twelve years old may be seen attending the spindles and many even at this age become very proficient."⁵⁵ Never a word escaped him questioning the long hours, low pay, employment of children, and large profits which

⁵³ Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, II, 252-264.

⁵⁴ Hendrick, *Training of an American*, 427.

⁵⁵ *State Chronicle*, November 10, 1883.

were characteristic of southern industry. In the 1890's he showed no appreciation of the real plight of the farmers, and he had nothing but scorn for "the Farmers' Alliance with its unsettling economic demands."⁵⁶ He predicted dire effects from an "extreme" North Carolina law to regulate railroads⁵⁷ and filled the pages of *World's Work* with eulogistic sketches of the captains of industry who were building and directing the trusts. Though the forces of industrialism had aided Page in freeing himself from the shibboleths and prejudices of the post-reconstruction South, they had fastened on him a new bias, and a new emancipation was necessary before he could see the problems of democracy whole.

The implications of Page's democratic philosophy were yet to work themselves out. By 1911 he was cautiously endorsing the program of the progressives of both parties, "a programme of opposition to the undue influence of corporations and special classes in government and its benefits."⁵⁸ The following year he returned to the Democratic party for the first time since Cleveland, an ardent supporter of Woodrow Wilson and the ideal of social justice embodied in the New Freedom;⁵⁹ and Wilson's "The New Freedom" appeared serially in *World's Work*.⁶⁰ It was in an address in 1912 that Page most forthrightly recognized the facts of modern economic life.

The present organization of our society, or to be more exact, its financial organization, is based to a great extent on privileges, on class distinction and advantage. . . . The thing that we call democracy now means to us chiefly equality of opportunity in politics, in the organization and conduct of government, and equal opportunity for education. It does not mean an equal economic chance. . . .

The strong movement of our day towards greater helpfulness cannot stop. Do you believe in giving the utmost opportunity that can be given to every man without any exception whatever, precisely as you would have that opportunity given to you? Search your heart. . . .

⁵⁶ Walter H. Page, "The Democratic 'Split' in South Carolina," in *World's Work*, II (July, 1901), 910.

⁵⁷ Walter H. Page, "North Carolina Railroad Regulation," in *World's Work*, XIV (September, 1907), 9272-3275.

⁵⁸ Walter H. Page, "The Progressive Programme," in *World's Work*, XXII (June, 1911), 14, 427.

⁵⁹ Walter H. Page, "The March of Events," in *World's Work*, XXIV (August, 1912), 364.

⁶⁰ Woodrow Wilson, "The New Freedom," in *World's Work*, XXV (January-March, 1913), 253, 421, 540, 628; XXVI (May-July, 1913), 59, 182, 302.

If any of these things seem radical to you today, be sure that they will be very conservative tomorrow.⁶¹

Page's valedictory to his work in the South and in America, delivered at the Southern Education Conference of 1913, contained a significant paragraph:

In our early days the characteristic of the people of the United States was individualism. Great as this was for the cause of democracy, it rested upon a false economic basis. A man's home cannot be his castle, for he is mutually linked as his brother's keeper, whether he will or no.⁶²

Walter Page's education never really ceased. And surely that is one measure of a man's greatness.

When Page came back to North Carolina in December, 1918, to die, the New South was ready to put an appreciative valuation on his services. As Edwin Mims wrote,

Neither his national nor international fame can obscure the thought in the minds of some that he was one of the great Southerners of his generation, and that no man has helped—positively helped—so many individuals, institutions, organizations, and movements that had as their primary aim the rebuilding of these old commonwealths.⁶³

Perhaps the finest tribute of all was that recorded by a Raleigh newspaperwoman:

The day I visited the little cemetery an ancient, rattle-trap Ford came banging into the church-yard

It contained a tall, lanky man, and seven children. He was a MacNeill from the next county—and was looking for Walter Hines Page's grave.

"It's been on my mind for a right smart time to bring my grandchildren here to see this grave. We're goin' to Southern Pines, so we just turned off here. They've seen Aycock's statue at the Capitol," he added proudly.

"I tell 'em them two men's the reason they done got a chance for a schoolin'—which their grandpap didn't have."

He removed his hat gravely and stood, paying tribute in his own way—as gracious and sincere a tribute as has ever been paid to the memory of a man.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Walter H. Page, "The Farmers' Credit," in *Proceedings of the 15th Conference for Education in the South* (Washington, 1912), 97.

⁶² Remarks of Walter H. Page as presiding officer, in *Proceedings of the 16th Conference for Education in the South* (Washington, 1913), 282.

⁶³ Mims, "Walter Hines Page: Friend of the South," 97.

⁶⁴ Charlotte Hilton Green, "World Is Now Beating Pathway to Tomb of Walter Hines Page," in *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 24, 1929.