De Bow's South

How One Periodical Reflected Education Reform in the Antebellum South

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ABSTRACT

J. D. B. De Bow was publisher of the Southern periodical "De Bow's Review" from 1846 until 1867. While beginning the journal as a place for advice concerning agriculture, industry, and infrastructure the periodical shifted its focus as De Bow moved from a Southern booster to fire-eater. Following this progression is the journal's opinions on education that, as the Civil War looms, becomes sectionally- minded. De Bow moves from advocating for education for the sake of a stronger cultural base and economic advancement to seeing education as the tool to isolate the South from the North and preserve proslavery ideology in the region.

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Introduction

De Bow's Review of "the Southwest, South and West; A monthly journal of trade, commerce, commercial polity, agriculture, manufactures, internal improvement, & c" was first published in January of 1846 in New Orleans, Louisiana. It remained widely circulated throughout the later half of the nineteenth century until it ended publication in 1884 and was the most circulated southern periodical at outbreak of the Civil War. In 1846 the Review was mainly authored by J. D. B. De Bow, the periodical's namesake, but featured an increasing number of guest writers and continued to be published after De Bow's death in 1867. The periodical was published every month throughout its run with the exception of a few interruptions. Before the outbreak of the Civil War became imminent the *Review* covered a broad range of agricultural, literary, economic and political topics, featuring articles as well as public opinion sections and letters to the editor. As tensions solidified between the north and the South in the late 1850s the journal became increasingly secessionist, defending slavery and arguing for the merits of an independent southern nation.

The prominent Southern periodical *De Bow's Review* indicates that educated Southerners tended to value education as an economic tool as they scrambled to catch up with Northern industry and infrastructure during the 1840s and 1850s. At the start of his publishing, J. D. B De Bow used the *Review* to guide Southerners

towards urban development and cultural resources such as schools and libraries, reaching a broad audience of entrepreneurs and planters in the Old South. As time the Civil War loomed, however, De Bow emerged as an outspoken fire-eater, using his *Review* as a platform to defend pro-slavery ideology and to promote Southern nationalism along with anti-union sentiment. While originally advocating for a broad system of public education in the South with a foundation of trained teachers, De Bow later published articles focusing on the need for a system of education designed to strengthen the soon-to-be Confederate States of America. By campaigning against the use of Northern schoolbooks and for strong Southern universities, De Bow sough to preserve Southern identity by sheltering students from the anti-slavery rhetoric of the North. De Bow also identified strong universities as a means for economic development; while many Southerners had to cross into the North to seek institutions higher education, De Bow believed that keeping these prospective students in the region would increase the professional and cultural value of Southern cities such as New Orleans and so bolster the Southern economy in general.

The American South has often been stigmatized for its failure to invest in education and other infrastructure. However, during the antebellum period the South dominated global cotton markets and was an extremely lucrative region to planters. This planter elite educated their children with private tutors and sent them on to northern universities. The majority of the white population of the South, however, could not afford to do this. As a middle class emerged in the 1850s, however, there was heightened demand for schools and universities in the South.

Slavery, however, prevented the South from following the North's pattern of education reform; political tensions between the regions pushed the South to develop their own educational system exclusive of the North, omitting northern teachers, textbooks, and ideas. As the landed elite and middle class drove the movement for education reform in the South, the southern model also focused on higher education and universities, more often than not private, standing in contrast to the North's commitment to accessible public education. James B. D. De Bow was a Southern booster who began the periodical *De Bow's Review* as a journal targeting the interests of agricultural and industrial Southerners, providing information on those enterprises. The journal, however, became extremely influential in shaping public opinion in the South. Through its selective articles and editorials *The Review* advocated for a sectionally minded scheme for education reform, focusing on the elite desire for strong universities that could challenge their Northern counterparts for influence over regional conceptions of slavery.

Background

The South in 1850

At the middle of the century, skilled craftsmen suffered from the debasement of their skills as division of labor and mechanization replaced traditional handicraft methods of production.[1] Many self-employed craftsmen and artisans fell to the status of wage laborers as the artistry was removed from production with the rise of assembly lines and mass production. This degradation of labor led to class conflict

[1] McPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. The Oxford History of the United States, v. 6. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

as skilled artisanal work disappeared with the rise of low wage unskilled labor. Jobs with the potential to generate middle-class Americans disappeared in Southern metropolitan areas, contributing to a growing class of poor Southerners whose numbers stood in stark contrast to the small, elite class wealthy plantation owners. This mechanical revolution added displaced industrial and trade workers to the preexisting class of poor white southerners struggling as yeoman farmers in Appalachia. At the same time the antislavery movement polarized the country's populace.[2] A positive defense of slavery emerged as the South fought to preemptively strike antislavery sympathies within its borders, arguing that slavery was in the best interest of both slaves and masters. Slaveholders succeeded in convincing most non-slaveholding whites within the South (two thirds of the white population there) that emancipation would mean economic ruin, social chaos, and racial war even for those individuals who held no slave property to lose.[3]

The lack of transportation infrastructure comparable to the North contributed to the South's reputation as backward. An extensive system of railroads and canals kept the North interconnected as well as giving it access to important ports and depots in the South. Within the interior of the South, however, few railroads were built. The transportation revolution that had boomed during the 50 years prior to the Civil War and was wrapping up by mid-century, failing to penetrate many regions of the South. The upland and piney woods regions in the forests of Amine and the Adirondacks, for example, found many Americans living in

[2] McPherson: 1988
[3] McPherson: 1988

a nearly self-sufficient premarket economy based on handicraft, not much had changed from the time of their grandparents.[4] The South's lack of investment in internal improvements and infrastructure stunted the region's development, reflecting the South's lack of industry and strong reliance on plantation-based agriculture.

Education was extremely unequal throughout the United States, following the trend set by the transportation revolution and contributing to the South's poor intellectual reputation. At midcentury the New England region of the United States led the world in educational facilities and literacy.[5] Over 95 percent of adults could read and write, and three fourths of children between five and nineteen were enrolled at school for an average of six months a year. The North at large shared very similar statistics; the South, however, lagged far behind. Only 80 percent of white adults in the South were literate with one third of white children enrolled at school an average of three months a year. Free black children fared even worse. New Orleans' large population of free blacks, which numbered 11,000 in 1860, were denied access to public schools and only about one-tenth of them could read and write.[6] These free blacks stood in addition to the city's 14,000 slaves who were also denied access to public schools and who almost without exception lacked any form of literacy.

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[4] McPherson: 1988

[5] McPherson: 1988

[6] "New Orleans Public School History: A Brief Overview." Cowen Institute for Public Service Initiatives. Tulane University: 2007

British observers praised the American education system of the North for breeding adaptive and versatile students, creating a workforce that was better at innovating and inventing than British workers trained through apprenticeships.[7] The widespread literacy and "adaptive versatility" among American workers was thought to explain the economic efficiency of American markets. While the craft apprenticeship system broke down in the United States, most children in the northeast went to school until age fourteen or fifteen. This meant that while the craft system broke down there was a shortage of the educated workers necessary to compensate for the changing economic model. The South needed innovators to improve its agriculture and commerce, but with such a low proportion of Southern white children attending school and the lack of strong universities and secondary schools it was difficult for the South to succeed. American workers were noted abroad for their ability to invent, seemingly "continually devising some new thing to assist him in his work."[8] The South desperately needed this innovative element introduced through formal education to support its agricultural and commercial base.

In the decades leading up to the 1850s it became increasingly apparent to American businessmen in the North and South that a system of common education was necessary for long term and significant improvements to the economy. Without an educated and thoughtful workforce industrial progress would stall; workers would only be worth as much as their labor contributions, which were readily

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[7] McPherson: 1988

[8] Rosenberg, ed. *American System*, 203; John E. Sawyer, "The Social Basis of the American System of Manufacturing," *Journal of Education History*, 14 (1954), 377-78

replaceable as technology evolved and factories prospered. An education also enabled new entrepreneurs and professionals to emerge, bolstering the values of city and state economies as they created new jobs and developed more raw materials. Textile magnate Abbott Lawrence advised a Virginia friend who hoped for his state to follow New England's industrial progress that, "you cannot expect to develop your resources without a general system of popular education; it is the lever to all permanent improvement."[9] It became apparent at midcentury that a proper system of education was a necessary tool to bolster the economy and increase the utility of the individual worker; one worker who could think on his feet at innovate at the job he had been given was of much more value than one who could not. As a Yankee businessman observed in 1853, "intelligent laborers can add much more to the capital employment in a business than those who are ignorant."[10]

Education was valuable in the States, and especially in the South, for its contributions to economic gain. A proper education could increase productivity and profit for an enterprise; this was valued by the region above the humanistic value of a liberal education, a more popular education ideal to the Northern audience. As Horace Mann wrote in 1848, schools were "the grand agent for the development or augmentation of natural resources, more powerful in the production and gainful employment of the total wealth of a country than all the other things mentioned in

[9] Abbott Lawrence, Letters to William C. Rives of Virginia (Boston, 1846), 6; Arthur A. Ekirch, The Idea of Progress in America, 1815-1860 (New York, 1944), 197.

[10] McPherson: 1988

the books of the political economist."[11] The South was extremely concerned wit the development and augmentation of natural resources as their economy rested firmly on the back of King Cotton. A widespread system of education, then, was seen as the solution to the South's lag in culture, affecting the economy through a lack of professionals and middle class white people. Between the planter elites and poor yeomen or hired farmers there was little space for a strong white professional class through much of the South; the economy was simply not structured for entrepreneurship and many professions.

The Antebellum Southern Middle Class

De Bow's Review was primarily targeted at the planter elite class of the Southern social hierarchy but also sought to develop and advance a middle-class audience. De Bow sought to strengthen the South not only through agricultural but through industrial and professional development, economic areas that would allow for a stronger middle class to emerge. This middle class would benefit the South by helping to establish a stronger school system to educate the middle class white youth and by contributing their professional skills to the South's economy in general. By promoting a stronger white middle class concerned with advancing industry, De Bow did not challenge the roll of slavery or the planter elite; instead, he was uniquely popular in the South for his advocacy of industrial development *in league with* the planter class to the benefit of the Southern economy at large without impeding the institution of slavery.

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[11] Michael B. Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform: educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 43; Horace Mann, "annual report of 1848," in The Life and Works of Horace Mann, 5 vols. (Boston, 1891), IV, 245-51.

In the 1850s the Southern middle class was struggling to emerge and form a distinct identity. The merchant profession, responsible for creating much of the middle class in the North especially in the mid-Atlantic region, was taboo in the South as evangelical religion gained traction. In some ways a reflection of the Biblical restriction on money lending for a profit, evangelical religions saw the world of commerce as materialistic and full of sin. They designated the term 'Mammonism' to describe the perilous and sinful sphere of merchants.[12] This religious taboo on trade frustrated the lower class or new middle class southerners who desired to increase their wealth through trade and advance in the South's stratified society. "Middling southerners, including the ministers themselves, were caught between the desire for acquiring wealth and feelings of guilt over this worldly longing."[13] Cities and towns, harboring the largest concentrations of professionals and commercial Southerners, were especially perceived as places of sin by evangelical religion, again preventing the Southern middle class to shamelessly develop itself through trade or profitable professions in the way that the middle class in the North had.[14]

Despite the taboo placed on the trade professions, "merchants became important to the development of small towns throughout the South. The merchant class often invested in a variety of private and public projects that would increase

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[12] Wells, Jonathan Daniel. *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

[13] Wells: 2004

[14] Wells: 2004

the profile of their community."[15] Merchants were usually of middle class standing, above yeoman farmers but unable to surmount the profits of the plantation owners who provided them with product. Merchants combined with white professionals began to forge a distinct middle class identity and set communal goals. This new middle class "came to believe that their interests were distinct from those of the planters, the yeomen, and the white laborers" and saw themselves as reformers and improvers of the South.[16] The middle class wanted to improve the South's infrastructure and culture to boost its prestige and credibility throughout the United States and to advance the standard of living for themselves. "Above all, [the Southern middle class] wanted to bring advancements in urbanization, manufacturing, and culture to the South. They saw no reason why the economic and cultural achievements of the North and South could not be brought to their region, as long as the call for greater investment was headed."[17] The middle class formed around shared values; "specifically, the hunger for internal improvements like railroads and banks, the need for more numerous and more elaborate manufacturing enterprises and more sophisticated cities, and the desire for cultural advances, such as libraries, lyceums, and public schools."[18]

These goals set both the ideological and political agenda for the emerging middle class. Capitalizing on this growing class, De Bow began to represent their interests and values through his editorials and articles. As historian Kvach writes in

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[15] Kvach, John F. *De Bow's Review the Antebellum Vision of a New South*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2013. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1501751.
[16] Wells: 2004
[17] Wells: 2004
[18] Wells: 2004

his 2010 book which emerged from his dissertation analyzing De Bow's antebellum economic and social policies, "Although he needed broad support from Southern readers, he had directed much of his editorial content toward a small but growing cohort of middle- to- upper-class Southern merchants, professionals, entrepreneurs, and planters. He became their public advocate."[19] As the middle class solidified, a significant number of De Bow's readers "accepted the primacy of cotton but hoped to redirect agricultural profits to fund transportation projects, civil improvements, and new factory construction."[20] De Bow tailored his journal to appeal to this audience of subscribers motivated by both profit and civic responsibility.[21] Civic improvements began to be seen as necessary to attract new growth to the South and a call for investment in public works was voiced by the middle class and echoed by De Bow's journal.

New conceptions of the family contributed to the emergence of the middle class. As the middle class was emerging and religion began to revive its role in dictating social behavior, women began to gain new standing as man's companion rather than his servant. Evangelical religion preached against frivolous subjects for women such as fashion and called for women to learn more weighty domestic responsibilities. While a majority of Southerners believed the separate-spheres and republican motherhood rhetoric characteristic of Northern gender roles, a minority of women began to claim equality of the sexes and advocated for education and respect for women in the public sphere. "Middling southerners claimed that in

[19] Kvach: 2013
[20] Kvach: 2013
[21] Kvach: 2013

modern civilization woman was not a plaything or a mere servant, subject to the whims of man, as she had been in the past, but instead she was the 'friend' or 'partner' of man."[22] The opinions of these women represented Southern middle class thought as women as well of men of the middle class began to see the social and economic advantages of a formal education. In an 1843 issue of the Southern paper the *Orion*, "a lady of South Carolina wrote:

> The day has passed which brought opprobrium on those of our sex, who dared to cultivate and improve their intellectual natures. The portals of sciences are no longer closed at the approach of woman ... By the liberal minded, it seems now to be admitted, that a cultivated mind, will not necessarily make a useless woman and that the capacity to enjoy the beautiful and wondrous in nature, or in the storied page, need not prevent the performance of one's social or domestic duty.[23]

During the Civil War a woman from Texas wrote a letter to *De Bow's Review* challenging an essay by George Fitzhugh previously published in the journal. The woman made a strong case for gender equality, challenging Southern societal norms. She wrote:

> If her creation was but for his pleasure, then why was she endowed with a mind capable of such a high degree of culture and expansion? Why was she endowed with the same attributes of thought and feeling? It is because the Creator intended her to be his equal- his companion--to share his destiny in time and eternity.[24]

De Bow's Review provided middle class women with a platform from which to voice these controversial opinions on gender equality and supported education reform at a time when access to higher education was increasingly desirable not only among the middle class as a whole but to women seeking more opportunities. Middle class

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[22] Wells: 2004

[23] "M", "Female Education," *Orion 3* (October 1843): 6I.

[24] "Editorial," *De Bow's Review* 32 (January/February 1862): 164-65.

women, then, were attracted to the journal both for its advocacy of economic and internal improvements in the South, central pillars to the middle class identity, and for its willingness to publish controversial and minority opinions.

Women's evolving opinions and dissatisfaction with education reflects the inadequacies of the Southern system during the Antebellum Period. In 1850 only 37% of free children in the South attended any kind of school. This stands in stark contrast to the North where 90% of children, both boys and girls, attended school regularly. This divergence in education is mirrored in innovation and creativity; despite containing 30% of the nation's population, the South only held five percent of the nation's patents.[25] The southern middle class in their call for public libraries and other infrastructure updates were beginning to realize the disadvantage created by this education gap. Limits on social mobility within the South were imposed as education was almost exclusive to elite children provided with private tutors and higher education required relocation to northern states. The new middle class wanted access to education that had so far been exclusive to the planter elites, leading them to reflect De Bow's desire for southern universities. However, the southern middle class had limited effectiveness in institution change as they were a diverse collective and were only active in times of economic prosperity, shying away from activism during times of economic downturn. Large plantation owners dominated Southern politics with their own interests and so an unstable coalition of the middle class was extremely weak against them. Therefore De Bow had to turn to the established elite class to realize his vision for education reform.

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[25] Majewski, John. Lecture. "History of the Civil War." October 3, 2013.

Jefferson's Vision of a Public Education System

Thomas Jefferson was an enlightenment politician and founding father who established the University of Virginia in 1819. An advocate for the Age of Reason, Jefferson believed in the powers of reason, analysis, and individualism and considered them their own authorities, calling into question the traditional social hierarchy. Jefferson's commitment to the ideals of individualism led him to perceive education as the great tool for social mobility. Public education would allow for a level playing field regardless of pre-existing affluence, instituting a meritocracy in place of the traditional European aristocracy where class was determined by birth rather than ability.

Jefferson believed in the availability of education to the public at the expense of the state. In Jefferson's time, every man was responsible for educating their own children to the extent of their ability. This meant that the wealthy were able to either hire tutors for their children or send them to private schools and universities while the vast majority were unable to provide any formal education for their children due to a lack of funds and the need for children as a source of labor. Occasionally a benevolent soul would make a provision in a will for a "free school" for the poor children in the area. These schools were, however, looked down upon as being "pauper" or "charity" schools and were avoided by parents with pride or with a concern for their place in society.[26] Schools such as these were seen as "public" institutions and scorned by all levels of society. Governor Sir William

[26] Wagoner, Jennings L. Jefferson and Education. Monticello Monograph Series. [Charlottesville, Va.]: Chapel Hill, N.C: Thomas Jefferson Foundation; Distributed The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Berkeley reflected the opinions of many in the colonies when he stated, "I hope we shall not have these [for a] hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience and heresy."[27] A formal education was itself seen by many as unnecessary and even undesirable.

Jefferson challenged the views of the time by being a strong advocate for public schools so that young Americans could learn to recognize and reject tyranny when it presented itself. Jefferson believed that public schools were the nation's greatest safeguard against the threat of tyranny and radically declared that "it is the business of the state to effect" a plan for public education as "our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that too of the people with a certain degree of instruction."[28] Jefferson drafted a bill in 1779 known as the *Bill for the General Diffusion of Knowledge* with the hope "to illuminate, as far as practicable, the minds of the people at large" through a formal public education system.[29] Jefferson's opinions ran counter to the conventional wisdom of the day as he rejected that only children born to wealthy families might have a chance at education. Jefferson was distraught that so many children born into lesser circumstance but "whom nature hath fitly formed and disposed to become useful instruments for the public" had "no opportunity for education and thus of being of service to society."[30] As Wagoner writes, "Jefferson's proposal, so simple to our ears,

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[27] Sir William Berkeley, "Report to the Commissioners of Trader and Plantations, 1671," in William Walter Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619* (Richmond, VA: Samuel Pleasants, Jr., 1810-1823), 2:511-517.

[28] Thomas Jefferson, Bill for More General Diffusion of Knowledge, *Papers*, 2:536-527

[29] Jefferson: 1779

[30] Wagoner: 2004

ran completely counter to the prevailing laissez-faire custom. It is better, he maintained, that all should be educated 'at the common expense of all."[31] While not so revolutionary in the North, Jefferson's idea of universal public education was revolutionary to Southern custom not only in advocating for the education of the masses but for an organized system of public education at the cost of the state.

These opinions stand in contrast to De Bow's. While De Bow did argue for an increase in the availability of education his motives differed strongly from Jefferson's. While Jefferson hoped to illuminate young minds against the threat of tyranny and preserve liberty and democracy while providing intelligent underprivileged children with an opportunity for social mobility, De Bow sought to preserve Southern identity and increase the value of Southern culture for the sake of the economy. Later, De Bow would embrace aspects of Jefferson's rhetoric to support a Southern system of education independent of the North. Jefferson stated in a letter to George Washington in 1785, "It is an axiom in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that too of the people with a certain degree of instruction. This it is the business of the state to effect, and on a general plan."[32] De Bow interpreted this to fit his secessionist attitudes, as he saw a public education system in the South as a tool to gain liberty from the North so the Southern youth could be educated in a way that supported Southern ideas about slavery.

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[31] Wagoner: 2004

[32] Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, January 4, 1785 [i.e.1786], *Papers*, 9:151.

James D. B. De Bow

As Kvach describes in the introduction of his dissertation *De Bow's Review: The Antebellum Vision of a New South*, De Bow led a paradoxical life that influenced his later writing and politics. Born to a middle-class merchant family in Charleston, South Carolina on July 20, 1820 De Bow's family faced financial difficulties following the Panic of 1819. After moving several times in the years preceding De Bow's birth the family settled in Charleston where his father opened a grocery store. The family accumulated enough wealth as shop owners that in 1820 the family owned three slaves. However, they were not able to escape the nation-wide bleakness brought on by the Panic of 1819 and the family lost its grocery store and was forced to declare bankruptcy. On July 14, 1926 James D. B.'s father, Garrett, died at age 51 from dyspepsia, survived by his wife and four children.

The family left without a provider, James D. B. had to begin employment as a clerk selling liquor at E. and L. B. Delano and Company. Tasked with stocking shelves, inventory and other mundane tasks, De Bow faced long periods of inactivity and boredom, shaping him into a both restless and despondent young man. His published reflections on his youth, however, paint a much more positive memory of his childhood in the South. These inaccurate, romanticized memories of the South shaped his purpose in publishing *De Bow's Review*; he sought to improve the community and economy of the South by promoting both "personal profit and community development".[33] Forever attempting to consolidate his Southern identity with his American one, De Bow, like the region itself, moved increasingly towards

[33] Kvach: 2013

separatist views throughout his life. Visions he later accounts such as steam boat rides to the neighboring Beaufort and Bay Point to see family, memories of stealing grapes from the yards of neighbors, all paint a picture of the "*Good Ol' Dixie*" South, a friendly and whimsical sort of place. His conflicting memories of sights such as patches of grass pushing through empty pavement reflect his later commitment to the urban and industrial improvement of the South.

Although he is enamored by the South's self-created image as the friendly, community-oriented region of the country standing in opposition to the ruthless industrial North, De Bow acknowledged the need for infrastructure and industrial development to empower and stabilize the South. De Bow was uniquely able to advocate for changes to urbanization, industrialization and culture because, as Kvach highlights, he did so without threatening the existing Southern social order.

De Bow became the first Southerner to recognize and promote a comprehensive regional economic and social vision that blended the South's past with a more diverse future. He foresaw how slavery and plantations could coexist with railroads, factories, and cities. He wanted readers to understand that industrialists, merchants, and planters had similar goals and that the all needed to work together to improve the South's future. His journal succeeded because he introduced new innovations without ever threatening established southern institutions.

Charleston during De Bow's youth was "a city struggling to reinvent itself and become economically relevant again."[34] The Missouri Crisis, Denmark Vesey and the Nullification Crisis had "turned a worldly city inward" and shaped De Bow's sectional identify.[35] De Bow was exposed to the Nullification Crisis, becoming familiar with such leaders as John C. Calhoun and William C. Preston. The struggle facing the economy of Charleston and the struggle facing the South to maintain control over slavery both within their borders and to the West greatly influenced De Bow's writing as he strove to solidify Southern autonomy while restoring its cultural significance.

In September of 1836 De Bow lost both his older brother and mother to an outbreak of chorea within consecutive days. After battling another wave of depression, De Bow became determined to become a better person and attain professional success through hard work.[36] After De Bow's first published article "the Duel's Effect" in *The Charleston Courier,* De Bow grew his writing portfolio by taking advantage of the many opportunities in the city. He was published in *The Charleston Mercury,* the *Southern Patriot,* and other well-circulated papers, making him a minor name in Charleston literature. Ambitious to publish his own journal, De Bow moved to New Orleans in the hopes of escaping the competition of more eastern Southern papers and also examining the differences between the newer Southwest and the Old.

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[34] Kvach: 2013
[35] Kvach: 2013
[36] Kvach: 2013

James D. B. De Bow was the publisher and author of much of the southern periodical *De Bow's Review* that ran from 1943 until 1980 out of New Orleans. Appealing to the middle and upper classes of the South De Bow strove to expand southern agriculture and industry. As the Civil War approached De Bow's motivation for southern development shifted from generally improving the culture and economy of the South to creating a self-sufficient region independent of the commercial north. As his motivations shifted, the opinions featured in *De Bow's Review* and his own public opinions shifted towards secessionism and southern isolationism and away from his early pro-union sentiments. This change is reflected by De Bow's opinions on education reform as he advocates for the construction of southern universities and the screening of textbooks and classroom materials to preserve a southern identity for the youth and exclude all northern influences on the south.

De Bow intentionally appealed to the middle and upper classes of the South both because they were the only ones to whom the agricultural and industrial articles would appeal to and because they were the only ones who could afford to subscribe to such a periodical; "De Bow had spent fourteen years cultivating support for the Review, and he understood his target audience."[37] The structure of southern society consisted of a large base of black slave labor and poor white yeoman farmers, a relatively small and disempowered middle class of merchants and other professionals, and a super elite class of white industrial engineers and plantation owners. Because of the large population of slave or poor labor, de Bow had to appeal

[37] Kvach: 2013

to the tastes and trends of the upper classes in order to make a living off of the periodical. The upper classes were concerned with higher education because of their interest in increasing the productivity of manufacturing and agriculture as the upper classes held a tangible stake in the region's economy. The Review, therefore, followed much more closely the moods of the upper Southern classes than it always did De Bow's own opinions; however, his editorials and the articles he selected to publish also influenced public opinion in the South. By publishing articles and editorials aligned with the opinions of the upper classes he influenced not only other upper class readers but also the lower class readers who were exposed to the periodical, shaping their opinions on topics such as education reform that they might otherwise never come to think about. In particular his attitudes on education reform tend to come organically from his own opinions on southern development and track his own movement towards a southern national identity, a separatist attitude that he reinforced in his southern patrons.

His own political trajectory, from a general booster of the South who declared he was no secessionist but would welcome viewpoints from that quarter in the magazine in the first years of publication to advocacy of a distinct and superior southern identity, is particularly apparent after the Kansas–Nebraska crisis of the mid-1850s. The Dred Scott case in 1857 provoked him to declare that he was in favor of slavery expansion, and by the time of the presidential election of 1860 he, a self- described 'fire eater', fully supported secession as the only rational choice for

the South.[38] The continuous shift of his own political opinions towards secessionism is evident in the sort of education he advocates ought to be implemented in the South; as his disdain for the North grows along with his dedication to the preservation of slavery De Bow begins to see education not only as a tool for Southern economic development but also as a tool to solidify Southern sectional identity.

As De Bow's disdain for the north grew in the 1840s he began to join regionally absorbed southern readers who questioned the motives of northern textbooks and publishing houses. Educational development had been a consuming issue in the South since the late eighteenth century and De Bow helped to channel the conversation on reform towards a sectional and regional alternative to the northern model of education reform. De Bow took it upon himself to research suitable textbooks for southern schools after reviewing Marcus Wilson's *History of the United States* that he deemed regionally slanted in favor of the north.[39] De Bow began publishing book reviews encouraging the adoption of texts he found appropriate for southern students. A devoted southern booster he sought out histories and other texts that reflected favorably on the South and more generously awarded praise to southern achievements than some northern standards.

De Bow's Review voiced the southern fear that sending southern students to northern universities would cause them to question the institution of slavery. Paranoia swept the South during the antebellum period as southerners increasingly

[38] Kvach: 2013
[39] Kvach: 2013

saw northern anti-slavery opinion as a vicious attack on southern society. Many southerners, such as George Fitzhugh who was featured in the *Review* on more than one occasion, developed a positive defense of slavery to convince themselves and their fellow southerners, as well as northerners, that slavery was the best possible moral and economic model for the United States. In 1855 De Bow published an article by The Reverend C. K. Marshall.

"The Reverend C. K. Marshall of Vicksburg, Mississippi, used the review to urge parents to stop sending southern students to northern universities because it distorted their views on slavery. Drawing from his personal experience as a college professor, De Bow urged his readers to support educational reform in the South. He demanded that a commission be created to screen textbooks from northern publishers. He also called for southern school administrators to stop hiring northern teachers."[40]

De Bow's motivation for education reform had shifted away from the simple desire to boost southern culture and investment and towards a sectional southern identity. This disdain for northern influences in the education of southerners cemented a divide between the educational systems of the north and that of the South as southerners actively isolated their region.

While De Bow was concerned with making viable universities in the South, in 1855 he also believed that the natural merits of the southern perspective would keep southern students in the South. He perceived abolitionism as fanaticism and

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[40] Kvach: 2013

saw its pervasion in northern universities as damaging to those institutions. "The fanaticism of northern universities intrigued him because he believed that abolitionism would drive southern students back to the south faster than the merits of southern universities alone."[41] While he continued to believe northern opinions on slavery would repulse many southern students, De Bow later began to realize that prestigious abolitionist or anti-slavery northern universities held a great deal of influence over not only their students but other universities hoping to emulate them. De Bow wanted powerful universities to be established in the South so that Yale and other anti-slavery institutions would not be able to diffuse their opinions so easily through southern higher education as they did through northern. "De Bow promoted the University of Virginia and other southern universities because he worried that, 'when old Yale sets the tune, all the thousand schools of the abolition states feel not only bound to chime in [about slavery] but do it as a necessary condition of their existence.'"[42]

As the role of education reform shifted in the South, more universities were necessary for the "*home education*" of their youth. The idea of home education not only entailed keeping more Southern students within the South for the extent of their education but also educating them in a manner compatible with the ideologies of their "home", i.e. instilling within their students the merits of slavery and denouncing the Northerners who might spread anti-slavery sentiments at Northern institutions. The southern social model differed from that of the north as slaves

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[41] Kvach: 2013

[42] Kvach: 2013, citing *De Bow's Review* "University of Virginia," 19 (August 1855): 218

accounted for a large amount of the population. After slave labor on the economic totem came yeomen farmers, often living in poverty, then white engineers and a small professional middle class and finally wealthy white plantation owners. The only families who could afford to send their children to universities were the wealthy planter elites and some of the better off members of the middle class. This meant that even as universities began to emerge in the South for the purpose of keeping Southern students in the region, education was less a vehicle for social mobility than it was a reaffirmation of the status quo.

De Bow published opinions supporting *public* universities in the South as he "supported a public university as a civic tool to attract new investment to the city" as well as to acquire prestige for the South and boost its culture.[43] In editorials De Bow authored for the *Review* such as "The Moral Advance of New Orleans" (1846) and "Education in New Orleans" (1847) De Bow demonstrates his commitment to higher education reform in the South. One school De Bow strongly supported was the University of Louisiana in his home city of New Orleans. Founded as the Medical College of Louisiana in 1834, it was established as a public university in 1847 by the state legislature. De Bow also had personal reasons for publicly advocating the public takeover of the university that later became Tulane University; Masuel White recommended De Bow to the school's board of administrators for a faulty position in return for his support of the school, resulting in his position as the first chair of political economy, commerce, and statistics when the university opened its

[43] Kvach: 2013

undergraduate academic program in 1851.[44] De Bow he believed in the university for ideological reason and used his journal to advocate for universities through public legislature and private funding; however, he was also a workingman who relied on subscriptions to his periodical for his income. This meant that his opinion on matters such as education could sometimes be bought, as demonstrated by his awarded faculty position. The added benefits form supporting institutions such as the University of Louisiana do not, however, stand in contradiction to his beliefs on education reform. Rather, they reinforce his commitment to expanding accessible high education for those intelligent and cultured enough to be able to take advantage of it and in turn benefit the Southern economy.

Education as a Tool to Enrich the Economy and Society of New Orleans

The first public schools in New Orleans were founded in the 1840s. James Baldwin was largely credited with their development, establishing New Orleans' first public school system in the city's Second Municipality, an American culture region north of the French Quarters. Baldwin was greatly influenced by the work of Horace Mann, an American political and education reformer, and recruited one of Mann's friends, John Angier Shaw, as the first superintendent of the city's Second Municipality. The city's municipalities maintained their own separate public school systems until the Civil War as the French-Creoles fought to maintain a separate system of French language schools.[45] The public school system of the Second Municipality was instated in 1842, five years before the year the article "Education

[44] Kvach: 2013

[45] "New Orleans Public School History: A Brief Overview." Cowen Institute for Public Service Initiatives. Tulane University: 2007

in New Orleans" was published in *De Bow's Review*. This article exults the positive change already effected by new public school system of New Orleans while encouraging further education reform to increase the public school system's reach within the city.

The author of the article "Education in New Orleans" from the 1847 edition of *De Bow's Review* was impressed with the progress of education in the expansive South and West United States. The author's identity can be assumed to be De Bow himself as a unique author is not noted and De Bow is known to have written many editorial pieces in his *Review*. The article determines that the rise in education is seen as essential to the growth of the city itself, both economically and culturally. De Bow insists upon the importance of a strong system of education within New Orleans, claiming "No city can advance to any elevation without providing the means of developing the minds of its growing population."[46] Education is seen as the tool to develop the population of New Orleans, creating intelligent and skilled workers who can contribute to the economy better than the uneducated. De Bow is already proud of the South's existing education reforms and praises the city of New Orleans for the reforms it has already undergone. Echoing the long-standing bias against public education in the South, the author proclaims that "She has discarded mere charity schools forever, and adopted the true system of common schools." Common schools, uniformly accessible and financed by the state rather than charitable individuals, appear to transcend the usual biases against a free system of

[46] "Education in New Orleans." James D. B. De Bow. The Commercial Review of the South and West. A Monthly Journal of Trade, Commerce, Commercial Polity, Agriculture, Manufactures, Internal Improvements, and General Literature, pp 248-251. The Office of the Commercial Review: New Orleans. 1847.

education. Prior to the institution of public schools in New Orleans in 1847, residents of the city had to rely on schools arranged through endowments from wealthy citizens, usually appropriated through their wills. These schools, dependent on charity, were stigmatized and avoided by many families who might have benefited from them.

De Bow uses statistics to demonstrate that the implementation of common schools in New Orleans did have a significant impact on the number or children who had access to education and took advantage of that opportunity. According to De Bow, a school opened in the Second Municipality of the city of New Orleans in 1842 grew from a few dozen "scholars of both sexes" to a total of eight hundred by the end of its first year.[47] While this school demonstrated a drastic improvement in children educated through the public system, of the 2,300 children in the municipality at the time only three hundred occupied private schools, leaving a thousand still without any formal education. This statistic represents the disparity still existing in the South in 1847 between those with access to education and those without. This might be partly explained by the lack of transportation in the South as compared to the North, meaning that children might not have a train or other form of public transport to take them to the school. It might also be party explained by the social inequality of the South; families struggling in agriculture or trade industries might need their children at home and so prevent them from spending the days at a school.

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[47] De Bow: 1847

However, there was between 1843 and December of 1844 a large increase in children attending school in New Orleans. In 1843 there were 1,156 students enrolled at public school with four hundred at private schools; by December of 1844 1,574 students attended public school. These statistics show a huge increase in the number of students taking advantage of the public school system. By the end of 1844, the number of children attending public school had almost doubled from the start of the Second Municipality's system in 1842. This statistic is also impressive as only one hundred more students started a private education as opposed to eight hundred new public school pupils, demonstrating how much of a greater impact the public school system had on the lower classes than the elite. According to the author, about 2,500 children total benefitted from the public school system in some form during the year. This probably means students who attended school part time for a matter of months owing to their need to labor for family farms or businesses or difficulty with transportation. By the end of 1844 only 736 students were reportedly missing from any sort of schoolroom for any portion of the year within the city.

De Bow projects that at the end of his year of writing, 1847, there will be ye another drastic reduction in the number of children who do not attend school for any part of the year. He hopes that "before very long not a child will be without the means of obtaining a fair and liberal education in New Orleans."[48] While this article points out a drastic improvement within the city of New Orleans with the implementation of a public school system, it also foreshadows a need for higher education opportunities within the city and the South at large. With more students

[48] De Bow: 1847

accessing a basic education at the expense of the state, there were more opportunities for the South to send individuals to universities and colleges, most of which were located in the North.

In the article "Moral Advance of New Orleans" the author, presumably De Bow, argues for education as a tool to redefine New Orleans as a cultural center rather than merely a shipping depot. He blames the city's lack of culture for the miscreant behavior associated with the city and argues that a better system of education would keep the youth busy in a productive manner and raise the value of the entire city. He claims that, "disguise the fact as we may," the city has "the reputation for being a great charnal house" where "disease and death usurp for ever a horrid empire."[49] He discredits this reputation for disease and outbreak, citing that New Orleans has not experienced any epidemic in the past six years save a few cases of fever, significantly reducing the city's death rate. The city, however, faces "a worse reputation still."

De Bow denounced the city for having become known only as "a great depot of merchendize, one vast warehouse."[50] New Orleans had the reputation of a great stockyard, devoid of the normal characteristics of community and society. He claims that "every inhabitant is a mere transient adventurer, without any kind of local feeling or bond of union." This lack of community spirit was especially worrisome at a time when urbanization was not yet as widespread as it became in the twentieth century; (look up who settled NO- hopefully Southern). If New Orleans was only

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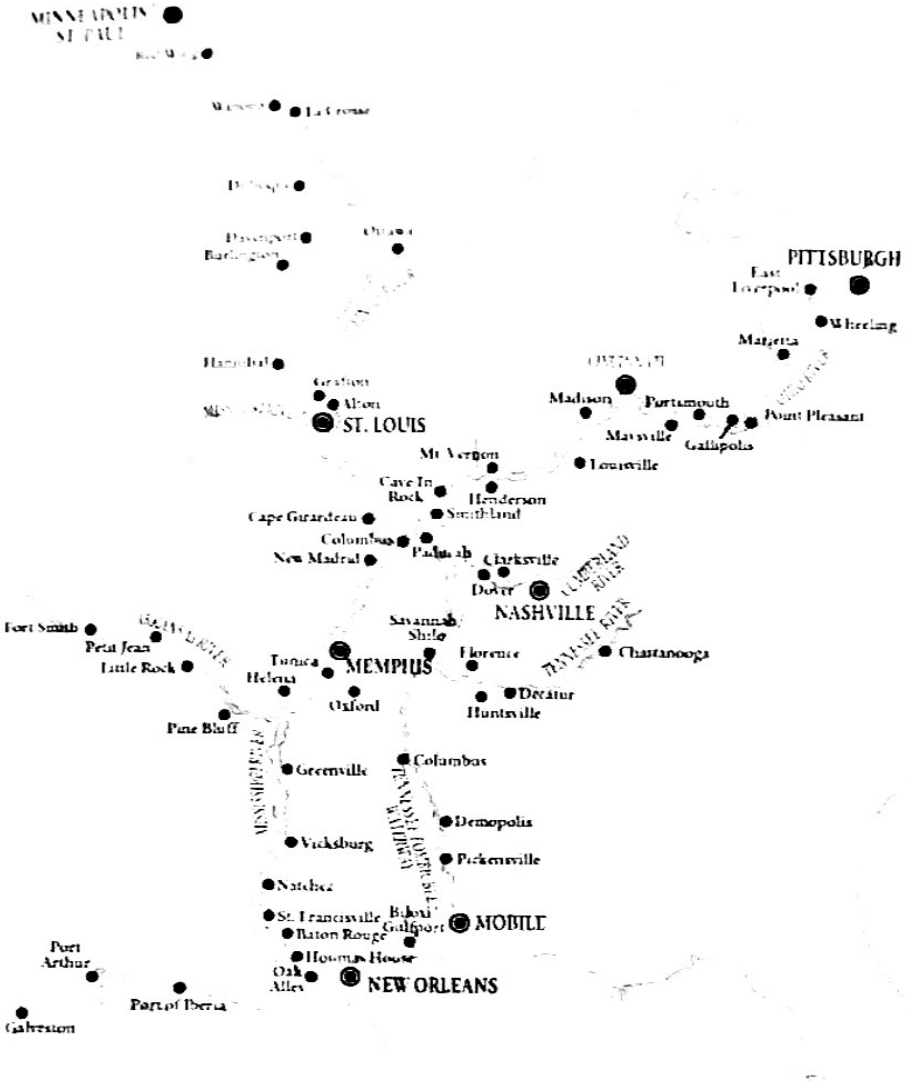
[49] De Bow: 1847

[50] De Bow: 1847

defined by its industry and commerce and lacked any sense of community or society than the city would be undesirable to live in, devaluing the city and guarding it against any influx of educated professionals or other vessels of culture. De Bow highlights that there has been progress over the last couple years as elegant new private residences had been constructed and that with the proper priorities the city could be transformed so as not only to be a commercial center but a cultural one as well.



Modern Day Map of Louisiana and Surrounding Major Waterways[51]

As New Orleans is located at the terminal end of the Mississippi River it has historically maintained a booming shipping industry. In 1840 it was ranked fourth busiest commercial port in the Western world after London, Liverpool, and New York.[52] During the 1860s railroads were developed connecting New Orleans to Biloxi, Pensacola, and other Eastern points, expanding the reach of the city's port to the East and the basin of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.

[51] http://www.americancruiselines.com/images/maps/msr_lg_030111.jpg

[52] " Campanella, Richard. New Orleans: A Timeline of Economic History." New Orleans New Opportunities- New Orleans Business Alliance. Tulane University: 2012

De Bow wanted to raise the cultural level of city, creating a society that values education and intelligence as a partner to commerce. Without the societal order and infrastructure that a proper society provides, commerce can only advance so far and the city itself will be stunted. Stockyards and shipping did not promote the businesses, residential neighborhoods, and families that De Bow would like to see drawn to the city, thereby raising New Orleans from a mere transient city to one full of life and a higher sort of people. De Bow favored the upper mercantile and planter elite classes, seeing little value in the poor worker class individuals attracted by the shipping industry. In 1851, a peak of 52,011 immigrants arrived in New Orleans. This vast influx marked New Orleans as the primary immigration port in the South and second largest immigration port of the entire United States after New York between 1837 and 1860.[53] New Orleans' status as a huge immigrant city made it extremely difficult for feelings of community to build. Immigrants generally brought much of their own culture from their home countries in Europe, including their own food, ideas on education, and language. Such a large, diverse population did not assimilate well to community. In addition to the barrier to community posed by the number and diversity of immigrants to New Orleans, the city's status as a primary immigration port meant that many people within it were transient. Many immigrants landing at the port of New Orleans did so as a means to access other cities and states, often traveling up the Mississippi in search of jobs or West in search of cheap land. With a high turnover in population New Orleans fostered a temporary fell to its atmosphere during the second half of the nineteenth century,

[53] Campanella: 2012

an obstacle in the way of community and an educational infrastructure that De Bow recognized and tried to remedy through public schools and universities. These would, he argues, secure an infrastructure of professionals and middle class individuals to form a solid foundation for the city.

De Bow identifies education in particular as the means for advancing the city of New Orleans morally and socially. Education would raise the city out of its reputation for transience and dirtiness and redefine it as a place of culture where real *"men"* would be raised. By this, De Bow means citizens who are moral against such vices as the city has to offer and are instead industrious and moral individuals. These sorts of people are what De Bow hopes to raise through the city's education system and also attract to New Orleans through the elevation of culture and intellectual entertainment that a native population of men such as these would invent within the city. He insists in 1847 *"A society must be formed, social institutions promoted, literature encouraged and sustained, intelligence broadly disseminated, and a fixed and settled order of things secured."*[54] Specifically, De Bow identifies a system of public schools as the solution, advocating that, "a laudable public spirit take possession of us all."[55] A common public school system for a basic education would be most effective as it would target lower-income children, developing within them a respect for knowledge and cultivating an interest in higher forms of entertainment than culturally degrading ones such as gambling.

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54 De Bow: 1847

55 De Bow: 1847

De Bow breaks from later contributors to The *Review* such as Morgan as he advocates for education reform to advance the economy and solidify local unity rather than to support autonomy form the North. According to De Bow a system of public schools is not sufficient, however; New Orleans must also continue the education of its people through the university level. "Education must not only be begun, but completed." Institutions of a high nature, according to De Bow, are required in the form of academies and colleges.[56] He argues that a system of higher learning not only serves to elevate the city by disseminating knowledge of the arts, literature, or law but also the useful and the practical, namely agriculture and commerce.[57] De Bow asks his audience, "A professorship of the arts, of the sciences, of law, of literature, of *agriculture* and COMMERCE- shall we not have these?"[58]

Higher education, he argues, produces men who are of value to the community and can contribute economically besides as manual laborers. They can instead be lawyers, scientists, and innovators in agriculture, a major economic sector in the South. De Bow believes it would be possible to fund given the wealthy citizens and public benefactors of New Orleans and the liberal state legislature. He also looks to the young people themselves, citing their "disposition to be improved and enlightened." He sees no barrier to the construction of such universities as New Orleans had both the private funds necessary to build such an institution and the willing youth to occupy it. Here he makes a distinction from his advocacy for public schools as he imagines these universities to be funded by the donations of wealthy

[56]De Bow: 1847
[57]De Bow: 1847
[58]De Bow: 1847

citizens and public benefactors. He also looks to the state legislator to help with the implementation and perhaps financing of these universities, but names private donor-ship more seriously. This belief in accessible public education combined with private universities is reflected by De Bow's role in the establishment of Tulane University, a premier university in New Orleans.

A strong system of public schools and universities, he also argues, would halt the "dread delusions of vice" which have permeated the under stimulated youth.[59] He insists that the main cause for the delinquencies in the youth and criminal activity of that *"the sources of domestic and social enjoyment are so few in New Orleans."*[60] He cites a time a year before his writing when a series of public lectures from professionals on a variety of subjects came to the city. According to the article "the largest hall in the city, night after night, was crowded by them."[61] The youth temporarily avoided the vices of New Orleans and found a more congenial and productive way to spend their nights. The problem extends to strangers, too, who are unable to find any access in to society of a decent sort, thereby attracting the wrong sort of visitor and perpetuating the city's transient nature. De Bow believes that accessible public education through the university level allows the city of New Orleans to "elevate public taste and enjoyment, and to arrest the progress of the mischief we have deplored."[62]

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[59] De Bow: 1847
[60] De Bow: 1847
[61] De Bow: 1847
[62] De Bow: 1847

As the South moves towards secession in the late 1850s and 1860s De Bow's attempts to strengthen the Southern community of New Orleans through education to raise the value of the city and attract middle class professionals to the area gave way to his attempts to use education to strengthen the Southern identity of the region. Education reform in the South became a tool to keep Southerners in the region not to elevate its commerce and value but to keep in those who were either in support of or agnostic towards slavery. Rather than being concerned with the vices that the youth might have engaged in, De Bow he became concerned with the Northern opinions they might be exposed to. By creating a strong system of common schools and creating strong universities, De Bow believed the Southern youth could be kept ignorant of the anti-slavery arguments spreading through Northern schoolbooks and universities.

A Southern Education to Solidify Southern Identity on the Eve of War

An old Southern couplet goes as follows: "'Tis education forms the youthful mind;/Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."[63] In 1860, just before the outbreak of the Civil War on April 12, 1861, J. W. Morgan published an article in *De Bow's Review* agreeing with these lines. Morgan supported a crusade against outside ideas, highlighting the insecurity of southerners about the retention of slavery and in turn public opposition to the issue both from within and without the South. Morgan explains how a boy of 12 would willingly believe ideas that a man of 25 would scrutinize and reject, reinforcing the necessity that Southern boys be educated on proper Southern beliefs on slavery from a young age before they mistakenly absorb

[63] J. W. Morgan. "Our School Books." *De Bow's Review*. Vol. XXVIII (April, 1860) pp. 434-40

abolitionist rhetoric. Morgan's advocacy for the isolation of Southern education to strengthen Southern identity and sympathy for slavery shows a dramatic shift from previous editorials in *De Bow's Review.* Where previously The *Review* argued for education reform to bolster the economy and raise Southern society in the two decades preceding, it was now used as a platform to spread Southern nationalism and support for slavery.

Morgan's argument centers on the Southern rhetoric of the positive defense of slavery, which gained momentum in the lead up to the Civil War. Morgan acknowledges the growing identity of enslaved blacks, supported by Northern abolitionists, as human victims trapped in an inhumane system. Morgan displays disdain for this growing sympathy, describing the Northern vision of slaves as "dusky angels"[64] as if this phrase in contradictory in itself. Morgan also reduces the Northern view of slaves to that of martyrs, implying that black slaves are discontent for the sake of sympathy and self-serving rather than victims of abuse. Morgan claims that Blacks have proven themselves to be incapable and failures and transforming into prosperous men and so do not contain the potential to live as free men outside of the institution of slavery, not only rejecting the view of slaves as oppressed by insisting that their captivity is in fact a positive good.

Morgan actively advocates for the removal of all schoolbooks taught in the South that denounce slavery or present Southern slaveholders in a negative light based on the cruelty of slavery. He sites a school history of the United States, not specifying whether found in the North or South, describing slavery as a "cruel wrong

[64] Morgan: 1860

on the poor African American"[65] and an institution that has "continued so long, that the removal of the evil, though much to be desired, has become, year by year, a question of greater difficulty." These passages reflect the fact that even at the time of slavery it was construed by many, especially in the North but as Morgan admits also by many in the South, as a backwards remnant from the original colonies not intended or desired to be continued. Morgan admits of the published anti-slavery bias that "in every department of school-literature will you find numbers of such. Indeed, the one to which I have referred, is far less objectionable, in this respect, than many others I have seen."[66] Morgan argues fiercely for the neutrality or even positive approach of taught literature towards slavery despite the growing opinions against the cruelty of the institution, opinions that he acknowledges are widespread and popular despite his certainty that they are false.

Morgan's positive defense of slavery, following from the assertion that Blacks are in fact incapable of success on their own, reflects the contemporary beliefs of McPherson, the authority on Civil War era scholarship today. McPherson argues that the Antebellum South was backwards and willfully ignorant and rejected criticisms of slavery using unpersuasive arguments. While the positive defense of slavery does appear to support this portrayal of the South, the question remains whether Southerners themselves tended to be educated and what the opinions of the educated South were towards education itself. As is made clear by Morgan, many southerners rejected all Northern influences on education in the South, an opinion

[65] Morgan: 1860
[66] Morgan: 1860

generally supported by publications in *De Bow's Review*. De Bow himself supported these ideas, which he published in his periodical, and also advocated for the creation of strong Southern universities as a stronghold against the dogma of Northern intellectuals.

De Bow's Review shaped education reform in the South on one level by supporting Southern intellectuals and their ideas by publishing such men as J.W. Morgan, allowing the Review to become a sounding board for Southern rejection of Northern influences in education, and also by publishing his own opinions on the creation of new schools that would be more wholly Southern, insulated from poisonous Northern opinions on slavery. The focus of many Southern intellectuals given an audience by De Bow's Review tends to be on the necessity of a regulated and educated league of teachers, an idea that can be expanded to include the regulation of the Southern-ness of these teachers. Morgan declares, "education is in fact the grand engine on which, as it is well or ill conducted, the prosperity or ruin of states and nations ultimately depends."[67] By ensuring that teachers in the South were not only credible and educated in the art of teaching but also that they were Southern and promoted Southern ideals, Morgan and De Bow believed they could keep the South strong and running prosperously.

The war, however, did not serve New Orleans' kindly. The Southerners who believed in their vision of New Orleans' as a city of a great and independent South overestimated their ability to disconnect the South form the North. During the years 1861 to 1865 Louisiana was seceded from the United States and a part of the

[67] Morgan: 1860

Confederate States of America. New Orleans, however, was recaptured and occupied by federal troops in May of 1862, ending the city's legacy of slavery after 143 years. Southern agriculture was devastated across the board following the South's loss in the war but New Orleans was especially damaged economically. The region's slave-based plantation industry collapsed forever, limiting the amount of cotton that could be processed and shipped from New Orleans. In addition to dramatic reductions to this large sector of the city's shipping industry, New Orleans' shipping commerce was interrupted for the duration of its occupation during the war years as the North sought to damage the South financially. Rather than bolstering the economy and society of the South, the Confederate State's grab for independence, supported by its independent system of education, damaged its economy and caused lasting social inequalities. Tulane University was also forced to close during the war years 1861 to 1865, demonstrating that the South's attempted rebellion through education ultimately backfired and stunted their own development socially and economically.

The Need for a Professional Class of Teachers in the Antebellum South

In the article "Popular Delusions in Education" from the June 1846 publication of *De Bow's Review*, Dr. D. McCauley argues that the South needs to institutionalize standards for teachers to keep the unqualified from exploiting the profession. Teachers are essential to the integrity and strength of a nation's system of education, and in 1847 the South lagged in both professional teachers and accessible education. McCauley argues for the increase in educational institutions in general, seeing an education as essential to the development of civilized people; he does, however, seem to make a distinction between who ought to have access to

higher education, believing that it is suitable for the higher classes but unnecessary for the average Southerner.

McCauley exults the importance of education for the development of a nation, proclaiming, "No nation, whether barbarous or polished, was ever known entirely to neglect education."[68] McCauley relates the essential nature of the region's need for a good system of education, pressing that "in every age, in every country" men have had a sense of the importance of education both to survival and civilization apart from barbarianism. McCauley describes how education has historically arose with the level of civilization as each community hopes to bestow what knowledge it can to the new generation. The South, then, represents a break form this pattern; with the United States a peaking economy in the West and the heir to many European traditions, it ought to have a great system for disseminating knowledge and educating its youth. McCauley believes that traditionally civilizations teach their youth all that their civilization allows them to bestow; not so in the South where in 1850, three years after McCauley writes, only 37% of children attended any sort of school throughout the year. While he is right that the South lags behind other developed western civilizations, educating only the elite was generally the universal norm before 1800; it is in the half decade following the turn of the century that determines the inferior position of Southern education through a lack of investment and planning.

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[68] McCauley, Dr. D. Delusions in Education." De Bow's Review. Vol. I (June, 1846), pp. 528-33.

McCauley sees a better system of education as essential to the South's economic growth as well as social development. Education not only emerges from civilization as man seeks to pass experience and knowledge to their offspring but also functions as the driving force behind the advancement of civilization. While a strong system of education, accessible to the masses, can strengthen a country, a lack of education can stunt it and cause it to fall behind in history. McCauley claims, "Education is in fact the grand engine on which, as it is well or ill conducted, the prosperity or rule of states and nations ultimately depends."[69] Education, then, is seen partially as a national strengthening force. Especially writing at a time when the New England region of the United States was leading the world in public education it would have been frustrating to see much of the South's economic and social potential squandered because of a lack of education. The South could only grow so prosperous from the cash flow created by plantation agriculture; a broad base of educated, industrious workers would be necessary to advance industry and business within the region.

While at the time of McCauley's writing in 1846 this seems to be a general statement about the importance of a strong system of education in the South as a community within the United States, interpreted through the perspective of the average white Southerner a decade later this statement could be seen as a call for the uniting and strengthening of the Southern United States as an independent nation. Education was seen as the foundation of a free republic after 1820, popularizing the idea of public and accessible education in the United States. A

[69] McCauley: 1846

strong system of education was seen by the North as a means to separate themselves from the United Kingdom while instilling in the youth the ideals of republicanism, especially individualism. A broad system of education itself is essential for a free republic as it means individuals are able to become informed, educated citizens and make their own decisions as well as fortunes with what skills they learn; in short, knowledge in the United States was equated with power. The South later used aspects of the republican association of education as they sough to build a strong Southern system for higher education, spreading positive opinions on slavery and separating the South from the North much as the North sough to severe itself from Great Britain. Reflected by the writings of J. W. Morgan in the *Review* in 1860, as the South sought to isolate itself from the North in the decade preceding the Civil War education was seen as a tool not only to strengthen the perceived independent nation of the South but also to sever that nation from the antislavery sentiments of the North.

To set the foundation for an education system capable of advancing the prosperity and civilization of the United States McCauley wants to develop a class of professional teachers. These teachers, according to McCauley, ought to be trained in the profession of teaching from early on, not just taken on to the position as you might hire any odd-jobs man. McCauley recounts his meeting with a man who was ferrying him across a river; as they got to talking, it emerged that this man worked a teacher for part of the year when he was not laboring on the water. The man explained that he worked as a teacher only "in the winter season, when he could get

nothing else to do."[70] McCauley believed from other experiences that he was certainly "not a solitary instance of teachers not trained to the profession in early life" and found this trend to be appalling.[71] McCauley wanted to see teachers educated as they would be for a profession or a respected vocation, beginning a course of education on the matter from a young age, perhaps their early teens to twenties.

The early training of teachers would ensure that teachers were not only suitable to education the next generation of Americans but also that they were not hacks or con artists. McCauley tells of his encounters with several such teachers attempting to hire themselves out. One such hack claimed that it was necessary for their students to swallow mercury along with paper to strengthen their memory; another charged exorbitant prices for private lessons without having any credentials to show. These individuals claiming to be teachers not only stunt the prosperity and education of the nation by failing to provide useful or real knowledge to their pupils but they also negatively impact the economy and society by taking money in exchange for professional services they completely fail to deliver. They take jobs from other educators who might actually pass knowledge to the pupil, stunting all progress that might be made in the South through private education. Objective standards for the education and competency of professional teachers, then, is essential to the success of a system of education in the South. The call for professionalism also implied that men were necessary. While the common

[70] McCauley: 1846
[71] McCauley: 1846

education system in the North evolved around female school teachers who saw school teaching as an opportunity to move form the private sphere to the public, school teachers in the South tended to be adult men who journeyed out of the North. McCauley puts a huge weight on the values of professionalism, frustrated that such poorly trained individuals are allowed to disseminate their false information.

It is unclear whether McCauley supported a broad public education system or whether he would have been as satisfied by a broad network of public schools so long as those hiring themselves as teachers were in fact properly trained in the profession. It appears to be the case, however, that with the common public school model of the South, which lagged so far behind the North in the 1840s, that McCauley was probably envisioning an increase in accessible, regulated private schools. Public schools did not spread quickly in the South, even where they were planted. In 1842 the first public school system in New Orleans opened, yet it only served the city's Second Municipality leaving much of the population without access.

While this article published in De Bow's Review advocates well-trained teachers for the advancement of the Southern economy, De Bow's own experience as a teacher left him scornful of the profession and of the rural areas in need of it. As a young man in 1838 De Bow could not find work in Charleston and so took a teaching position at a rural school in Golden Grove. Rather than relishing the clean mountain air and finding his time there pensive and enjoyable as he at one time claimed, De Bow found the school and the country to be deplorable. Unable to stay even a year, De Bow returned to the city. De Bow perceived himself to be held in envy by his peers and neighbors at the school, his scholarly image and knowledge of

literature placing him far above the common people he taught. He hated even the words they used, scorning uncultured vernacular choices such as the term "critter" for horse.

Following his time spent in disgrace as a teacher, in 1839 De Bow attended the Cokesbury School. In 1834 the school had been opened by the South Carolina Methodist Conference as part of a statewide initiate to provide education opportunities to all white citizens, regardless of economic status. While this experience convinced De Bow of the importance of a practical education for poor white southerners, it was not from a place of benevolence or from a conviction that these poor individuals could themselves contribute to the economy. As Kvach concisely puts it, De Bow saw the "importance of practical training for poor white southerners. He saw the value of raising the lowest members of society to the point of self-sufficiency, not because he cared about the person, but because that person would not become an economic burden on the rest of society."[72]

This attitude reflects his scorn for the poor country folk he encountered a teacher and demonstrates that De Bow saw education as incredibly important for the South, but dependent on economic class. While it might make sense for poor white southerners to learn practical vocational skills to support themselves, men such as himself were obviously meant for a higher, intellectual literary education.

De Bow's class-consciousness and later Southern fire-eater mentality caused him to support the education reforms that he did. Ultimately De Bow supported a

[72] Kvach: 2013

system of education that would educate the middle and upper classes so that they could contribute to the Southern economy; however, he also wanted to keep these Southern elites within the region and safeguard the youth from the anti-slavery arguments of the North. De Bow's political trajectory was reflected in the *Review* as he goes from publishing editorials such as "The Moral Advance of New Orleans" in 1846 and "Education in New Orleans" (1847) to editorials such as Morgan's "Our School Books" in 1860. De Bow's vision of the South as a reformer still relied on Southern slavery; his vision of Southern industry and commerce did not evolve independently of slavery, as it did in the North, but incorporated the institution. De Bow's interest in education reform was overshadowed in his later years by his commitment to Southern nationalism and slavery. De Bow believed by the end that the real vice young Southerners were vulnerable to was anti-slavery sentiment rather than gambling or crime. De Bow ultimately formed the belief that the best education- not only for Southern commerce but also Southern nationalism, slavery, and identity- was a Southern one.

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