Southern newspapers have persuaded themselves that the raising of the question of the negro's political rights may elect a Democratic President. Thus, the New Orleans Daily States declares that the Republican managers are "afraid of the race question." On the other hand, the New York Times expresses the Democratic leaders as eager to make it the main issue, "A campaign on this issue in the North would at least win enough Republican votes in the doubtful States to offset the vote of the negroes." More telling, however, than any such vague forecast is the revelation which men like every Postman and which, when taken up the real attitude of Northern Democrats. If they are so hot, to take up the issue of discriminating, by suffrage laws, against educated and property-owning negroes, it is somewhat surprising that more of them were not with the President's individual suggestions, willing to say so. The astonishing silence which a direct question has produced in men ordinarily voluble, is of great political significance.

The truth is, of course, that the issue of equality before the law, for the negro as for everybody else, is one upon which, when nakedly presented, all Americans must publicly agree. Privately, men may say that they are for inequality. They may even vote for it, in secret; but they cannot speak for it. And let it be borne in mind that it is simply the question of treating the negro citizen as every other citizen, which is now pressing to the front. There is no demand that the South make electoral laws which will admit every ignorant or vicious colored man to the ballot. Let the qualifications for the suffrage be what the separate States see fit to make them; only let them be impartially and honestly applied. What is destructive of all justice is discrimination against the intelligent and well-to-do negro, at the same time that the door is flung wide open for white men whom the very framers of Southern State Constitutions admit to be engaged in ignorance and vice. That is an attempt to build a democracy on the exclusion of a race; and it is the word of an American statesman who being dead, yet speaks, that no nation so built can endure. This is the thing—unfair enforcement of the law; making flesh of the white man and fish of the negro; the adroit effort, under cover of crafty statutes, to destroy the political rights written into the supreme law of our land by what Sumner called "irrevocable guarantees"—it is this which has been going on among us, not to theabor of our hearts and consciences of lovers of liberty in this country.

Mr. Shepard, who alone replied square and at length to the Evening Post's inquiry (Mr. Cleveland professed himself unwilling to trench on his vacation), admits, as might have been expected, that his sense of justice is offended by the exclusion of qualified negroes from the suffrage. To the penalities imposed above the blacks dwelling under the same laws is, he candidly says, to trample upon the Declaration of Independence and violate the express law of the land. This is a grievous and terrible thing, in Mr. Sheperd's eyes, yet he would have nothing done to correct it. The penalties specifically pointed out in the Constitution he would leave unenforced. Even that political redress which Mr. Justice Holmes pointed out as the sure remedy for oppression of the negro citizen, Mr. Shepard deplores. He excuses the South while blessing her. She is only doing what the North would do in her place. And then he has the familiar old talk about "racial" inferiority and the superiority of the white man as such.

Now this, to be perfectly frank, is the talk of a man who believes in caste. The idea of the policy advocated in the South is one which Mr. Shepard would apparently endorse—namely, that the most embittered white man is better fitted to vote than the most cultivated black man. It is the inveterate prejudice, the superstition, even, of caste which speaks in that. It dismisses all facts, forgets the noblest sentiments, spurns the most pathetic appeals—and all on the old unproved assertion that the worst white man is better qualified for representative government than the best black man.

We see from Mr. Shepard's words, as we may from Mr. Bryan's dreadful inconsistencies, how hollow will ring Democratic protests against the oppression of the Filipinos while there is democratic acquiescence in injustice to the negro. It would even appear that the great reason for making the Philippines independent is lost. We shall see our armies, if we send them, keep the brown men under our heel abroad as we mean to keep the black men at home. Self-government, the right of representation, all the traditional civil rights of American freemen, are to be kept merely for use 7,000 miles away, while conveniently forgotten in this country. The campaign of the Democrats would be, in that respect, one of overflying love for the brown brother whom they cannot see, but of callous disregard of the black brother whom they can see.

Open discrimination against the negro as a voter cannot stop there. It really means discrimination against him as a man. That is why we think it so hateful and perilous. It signifies a willingness to extinguish the hope of an entire race. Instead of encouraging its members to rise, and rewarding them when they did rise, it would close the door of opportunity to them all. That is the true implication of the exhortation to the colored men to give up their "nonsense" about political rights and to turn to "useful pursuits. It means that what is wanted is a subject class of willing or forced workers. Wrapped up in the caste spirit which works that the negro cut his political rights, is the intention to deny him his human rights.

WORKING OF THE NEW MILITIA LAW.

The disbandment of the famous Washington Artillery of New Orleans because its members declined to serve under the Dick law militia, the passage of which was one of the achievements of Secretary Root, indicates one of several misunderstandings of the statute. Indeed, it might be expected that the public has any clear idea as to what Congress has accomplished by this legislation. In the South, particularly, there has been much uneasiness. Some of the newspapers have read into the law an invasion of State rights. One Louisiana journal even found the act a "jewel" might use Southern militia to back him up in his anachronistic policy of giving office to an occasional worthy negro.

All of this anxiety is needless. As far as the power of the States over their militia is concerned, the Dick law merely reaffirms what was law in the Revised Statutes. It is true that the President is given the right to fix the number of men in a company, and to prescribe such rules and regulations as he sees fit. Whether the States will accept them is another matter. This question they have five years to decide. The President has no mean to force New York, for instance, to accept the rate-practice regulations which have already issued from the War Department for the guidance of the militia, unless he be withholding the State's share of the Federal militia appropriation. When it comes to ordering up the negro troops, the President has no real powers beyond those granted by previous legislation. He can still, in accordance with the Constitution, call out the militia to repel invasion, to put down insurrection, or to enforce the laws. For this purpose he may send an order direct to such militia officers as he may select. But in all this procedure there is nothing new or revolutionary.

Looking at the development of the militia as a whole, its friends may be said to be divided into two camps, those who would make of the militia a trained, national reserve for the regular army, and those who would make it primarily a more efficient body of State troops. The views of the former were set forth by Lieut-Col. James Parker of the army in the August North American Review. He had been up to this point an ardent advocate of the National Guard in matters of the War Department, and therefore speaks with considerable authority. His idea is that the State troops will become "our second line of defense." In imagination he sees,