

The Negro Race in the United States

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There were in 1900 in the United States and its dependencies 8,840,789 persons of acknowledged Negro descent. To-day the number is probably ten millions. These persons are almost entirely descendants of the African slaves brought to America in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

1. *The Slave Trade.* -The African slave trade to America arose from the desire of the Spanish and other nations to exploit rapidly the resources of the New World. The attempt to use the native races for this purpose failed because of the weakness and comparative scarcity of the Indians. Conditions in Africa, on the other hand, favoured the organisation of the slave traffic. A strong Negro-Arabian civilisation in the Soudan had forced back the barbarians to the fever-cursed Centre and West, and there the stronger and fiercer Bantu and other nations dominated and enslaved the weaker tribes. The coming of the Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century was the occasion of transporting some of these slaves to Portugal, and from this, in time, came the slave trade to the West Indies.

The African slave trade soon became a profitable venture, for which the Portuguese, Dutch, and English competed. Finally, in 1714, the English secured a virtual monopoly of the North American trade and poured large numbers of slaves into the West. The exact number of slaves imported is not known. Dunbar estimates that nearly 900,000 came to America in the sixteenth century, 2,750,000 in the seventeenth, 7,000,000 in the eighteenth, and over 4,000,000 in the nineteenth, perhaps 15,000,000 in all. It goes without saying that the cruelty incident in this forced migration of men was very great. For a long time the policy of the slave owners was to kill off the Negroes by over-work and buy more. Family life was impossible, there being few women imported, and sexual promiscuity and concubinage ensued. When finally, for physical and moral reasons, the supply of slaves began to fall off a new development began.

II. *Growth and Physique of the Negro-American Population.* -The growth of the Negro population in the English colonies in America may be estimated as follows: -

1710 50,000
 1725 75,000
 1750 220,000
 1754 260,000
 1760 310,000
 1770 462,000
 1780 462,000

The United States censuses give the following figures: -

| Date. | Total Negroes. | Per Cent. of Increase. | Per Cent. of Increase of Whites. | Per Cent. of Negroes in Total Population. |
|-------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1790 | 757,208 | - | - | 19.27 |
| 1800 | 1,002,037 | 32.33 | 35.76 | 18.88 |

| | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1810 | 1,377,808 | 37.50 | 36.12 | 19.03 |
| 1820 | 1,771,656 | 28.59 | 34.12 | 18.39 |
| 1830 | 2,328,642 | 31.44 | 34.03 | 18.10 |
| 1840 | 2,873,648 | 23.40 | 34.72 | 16.84 |
| 1850 | 3,638,808 | 26.63 | 37.74 | 15.69 |
| 1860 | 4,441,830 | 22.07 | 37.69 | 14.13 |
| 1870 | 4,880,009 | 9.86 | 24.76 | 12.66 |
| 1880 | 6,580,793 | 34.85 | 29.22 | 13.12 |
| 1890 | 7,488,789 | 13.79 | 26.68 | 11.93 |
| 1900 | 8,840,789 | 18.1 | 21.4 | 11.6 |
| 1910 | 10,000,000 (estimated) | - | - | - |

The census of 1870 was defective, and probably that of 1890 also, which would explain the chief irregularities in the rate of increase of Negroes. The higher rate of increase of the whites is due mainly to the large immigration.

The present so-called "Negro" population of the United States is: --

1. A mixture of the various African populations -Bantu, Soudanese, West

Coast Negroes, some dwarfs, &c. There are traces of Arab and Semitic blood.

2. A mixture of these strains with the blood of white Americans through a long system of concubinage of coloured women in slavery days together with some legal intermarriage. The official figures for mulattoes are as follows: -

- 1850, mulattoes formed 11.2 per cent. of the total Negro population.
- 1860, mulattoes formed 13.2 per cent. of the total Negro population.
- 1870, mulattoes formed 12 per cent. of the total Negro population.
- 1890, mulattoes formed 15.2 per cent. of the total Negro population.

Or in actual numbers: -

- 1850, 405,751 mulattoes.
- 1860, 588,352 mulattoes.
- 1870, 585,601 mulattoes.
- 1890, 1,132,060 mulattoes.

These figures are of doubtful validity and officially acknowledged to be misleading. From observation and local studies in all parts of the United States I am inclined to believe that at least one-third of the Negroes of the United States have distinct traces of white blood, and there is also a large amount of Negro blood in the white population. This blending of the races has led to new and interesting human types, but race prejudice has hitherto prevented any scientific study of the matter.

Scientific physical measurements of Negro-Americans have not been made on any sufficiently large scale for valuable conclusions to be formed.

The Negro population shows, so far as known, a greater death-rate than the white. Throughout the registration area of the United States the figures are: --

Death-rate per 1,000 Living, United States Registration Area.

1890. 1900.
 Coloured 29.9 29.6
 White 19.1 17.3

These figures apply to only 1¼ million of the Negro population, and those mainly in cities. Of the death-rate of the mass of the population living in the country we know nothing. The chief causes of death among Negroes are: Consumption, pneumonia, nervous disorders, malaria, and infant mortality. The figures are: --

Deaths per 100,000 Living Negroes.

| 1890. | 1900. | |
|-------------------|-------|-----|
| Consumption | 546 | 485 |
| Pneumonia | 279 | 355 |
| Nervous disorders | 333 | 308 |
| Malaria | 72 | 63 |

To every 1,000 living coloured children, there were each year the following number who died: --

Children under 1 Year of Age.

| 1890. | 1900. | |
|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Registration States | 458 | 344 |
| Cities | 580 | 397 |
| Country | 204 | 219 |

The birth-rate is conjectural: --

Number of Children under 5 Years of Age to 1,000 Females 15 to 44 Years of Age for the Continental United States.

| | Total. | White. | Coloured. | Excess of Coloured. |
|---------------------|--------|--------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1900 | 474 | 465 | 543 | 78 |
| 1890 | 485 | 473 | 574 | 101 |
| 1880 | 559 | 537 | 706 | 169 |
| 1870 | 572 | 562 | 641 | 79 |
| 1860 | 634 | 627 | 675 | 48 |
| 1850 | 626 | 613 | 694 | 81 |
| 1840 ² - | 744 | - | - | - |
| 1830 ³ - | 781 | - | - | - |

From this we may conclude: -

- 1. The Negro birth-rate exceeds and has always exceeded the white birth-rate.
- 2. The Negro birth-rate probably decreased largely until 1870; then it possibly increased somewhat, and afterwards rapidly decreased.
- 3. The Negro birth-rate in the country districts is high. In the city it is low because of the immigrant character of the population.

In general the Negro population of the United States is brown in colour, darkening to almost black and shading off in the other directions to yellow and white, indistinguishable in many cases from the white population. The race is strong and virile, and, although hard pressed by economic and mental strain, is more than holding its own.

III. *Social History.* -Negroes came to America with the early explorers, and they took some part in exploration. Stephen Dorantes, a Negro of the Fray Marcos Expedition, was the discoverer of the South-Western part of North America; and there were many Negroes with Balboa, Pizarro, D'Ayllon, and Cortez. As the Dutch and English slave trade of the seventeenth century poured in larger numbers of Negroes, the question of their control and organisation became serious. They were carefully mixed by race and language so as to prevent conspiracy, and worked in gangs by severe taskmasters. This led to repeated revolts throughout the islands and on the Continent. Only two of these were large and successful -that of the Maroons in Jamaica in the seventeenth century, and of Touissant L'Ouverture in Hayti in the eighteenth century.

The moral theory of early Negro slavery was that the heathen were by this means brought to Christianity, and efforts were gradually made to convert them. The result was that after slow and hesitating advance the slaves were by the middle of the nineteenth century nominal Christians, and spoke the English tongue. The work of conversion and uplift was, however, greatly retarded by the rapid importation of Negroes after the Assiento treaty between England and Spain in 1714. England forced slaves on the colonies, and found them at first complacent; but at last they were frightened, and a distinct moral revolt against the system arose.

Finally a sort of new American feudalism was evolved out of which free Negroes from time to time escaped into the full privileges of freemen.

This was the situation at the time of the War for Independence with England. Probably ten thousand Negro soldiers fought for the independence

of the American colonies, and they were recognised as citizens. The undoubted thought of the founders of the Republic was that slavery would gradually die out, and the Negroes either become American citizens or migrate to Africa. This assumption received encouragement by the economic failure of slavery in the North and the emancipation of slaves.

Among the Negroes there were signs of awakening. The freedmen began to demand the ballot in Massachusetts and to organise churches and associations in Rhode Island, New York, and Pennsylvania, and some black persons of distinction arose like Benjamin Banneker, the almanac maker, and Phillis Wheatley, the poet. Negroes fought in the war of 1812 -there being black sailors with Perry and McDonough, and four hundred coloured soldiers with Jackson at New Orleans. About this time, too, definite steps were taken to suppress the slave trade from Africa.

Gradually, however, the strength of this liberal movement waned as the importance of the cotton crop increased. Signs of increased severity against slaves were manifest, and several slave revolts were attempted, that of Nat Turner, in 1831, being the most bloody.

From 1830 on the South took a new tone and began to defend slavery as an economic system against the growing attacks of the abolitionists, while the systematic running away of slaves gave rise to bitterness and recrimination. The free Negroes began to meet in conventions, the anti-slavery crusade was organised, and gradually slavery became the burning political issue. Negro leaders like Frederick Douglass now came forward, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published, fugitive slaves increased in number, and the nation was in a ferment.

When the civil war broke out because of the slavery issue, Negro soldiers were at first refused, but eventually two hundred thousand were enlisted, and even the South tried to arm the slaves.

From the first these slaves were a source of weakness and apprehension to the South. During most of the war the blacks remained quiet, and protected the white women and children while the masters were in the field fighting for their enslavement. Gradually, however, the meaning of the war dawned on them and they began to run away and join the Northern armies. Finally, as a war measure, the mass of them were emancipated, and this was later confirmed by a constitutional amendment.

When after the declaration of peace the question of the protection of the new freedmen arose, the nation paused in puzzled hesitation. Three courses were open: -

- (a) To leave the Negroes to the mercy of the whites, on condition that the whites accepted the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery.
- (b) To put the Negroes under special guardianship designed to help them as labourers, educate them, and secure justice for them in the courts.
- (c) To give the Negroes the power of self-protection by insisting on full manhood suffrage in the States with any restrictions the State wished to impose except restrictions based on "race, colour, or previous condition of servitude."

The first method was tried by Johnson. The result was a series of "black codes" which practically restored Negro slavery in almost every essential except name. As Carl Schurz reported: -

"Some planters held back their former slaves on their plantations by brute force. Armed bands of white men patrolled the country roads to drive back the Negroes wandering about. Dead bodies of murdered Negroes were found on and near the highways and by-paths. Gruesome reports came from the hospitals -reports of coloured men and women whose ears had been cut off, whose skulls had been broken by blows, whose bodies had been slashed by

knives or lacerated with scourges. A number of such cases I had occasion to examine myself. A veritable reign of terror prevailed in many parts of the South. The Negro found scant justice in the local courts against the white man. He could look for protection only to the military forces of the United States still garrisoning the 'States lately in rebellion,' and to the Freedmen's Bureau."

The second method was tried in the establishment of the Freedmen's Bureau, but the North demurred at the cost, the South complained at the principle, and the Bureau itself was not well managed. The Government was, therefore, as a last resort, literally forced to the third method which involved Negro voters. The argument for this was thus stated by Carl Schurz: -

"The emancipation of the slaves is submitted to only in so far as chattel slavery in the old form could not be kept up. But although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society, and all independent State legislation will share the tendency to make him such.

The solution of the problem would be very much facilitated by enabling all the loyal and free-labour elements in the South to exercise a healthy influence upon legislation. It will hardly be possible to secure the freedman against oppressive class legislation and private persecution, unless he be endowed with a certain measure of political power."

To the argument of ignorance Schurz replied: -

"The effect of the extension of the franchise to the coloured people upon the development of free labour and upon the security of human rights in the South being the principle object in view, the objections raised on the ground of the ignorance of the freedmen become unimportant. Practical liberty is a good school. . . . It is idle to say that it will be time to speak of Negro suffrage when the whole coloured race will be educated, for the ballot may be necessary to him to secure his education."

The Negroes themselves said to President Johnson through their spokesman, Frederick Douglass: -

"Your noble and humane predecessor placed in our hands the sword to assist in saving the nation, and we do hope that you, his able successor, will favourably regard the placing in our hands the ballot with which to save ourselves."

The result of the new basis of suffrage was at first demoralisation. The better class of Southern whites refused to take part in government even when they could, and the new and ignorant Negro voters were delivered into the hands of Northern and Southern demagogues, who looted the State treasuries. Finally, however, the Negroes secured a better class of white and Negro leaders, revolted from the carnival of stealing, and began honest advance and reform. They succeeded in giving to the new South: -

- 1. A more democratic form of government.
- 2. Free public schools.
- 3. The beginnings of a new social legislation.

Before this work was finished they were intimidated and put out of power by force and fraud, but as a prominent white leader said: -

"During their ascendancy they obeyed the Constitution of the United States. . . . They instituted a public school system in a realm where public schools had been unknown. They opened the ballot box and jury box to thousands of white men who had been debarred from them by a lack of earthly possessions. They introduced home rule into the South. They abolished the whipping post, the branding iron, the stocks, and other

barbarous forms of punishment which had up to that time prevailed. They reduced capital felonies from about twenty to two or three. In an age of extravagance they were extravagant in the sums appropriated for public works. In all of that time no man's rights of person were invaded under the forms of law. Every Democrat's life, home, fireside, and business were safe. No man obstructed any white man's way to the ballot box, interfered with his freedom of speech, or boycotted him on account of his political faith."

Despite this, the South was determined to deprive the Negroes of political power and force them to occupy the position of a labouring caste.

This was done first by open intimidation, murder, and fraud, through secret societies like the Ku Klux Klan. Finally, beginning in 1890, a new set of disfranchising laws were passed. These laws ostensibly disfranchised the ignorant and poor, but they allowed poor and ignorant whites to vote by a provision known as the "grandfather clause," which admitted to the polls any person whose father or grandfather had the right to vote before the coloured men were enfranchised. At the same time, these laws excluded from the polls not only the ignorant, but nearly all the intelligent Negroes, by making the local registrars judicial officers from whose decision as to fitness there was practically no appeal. These registrars were, of course, invariably white.

With this legislation have gone various restrictive laws to curtail the social, civil, and economic freedom of all persons of Negro descent. The question as to the validity and advisability of these laws, and as to the development of the freedom under them, and speculation as to the future of the race in America constitutes the Negro problem.

IV. *Social Condition of the Negro-American.* -After such a social history, what is the present social condition of the ten millions of persons of Negro descent in the United States, fully one-third of whom have more or less white blood? We may best consider this under certain sub-heads: --

(a) *Distribution.* -The distribution of the Negro American population is very uneven, the coloured people being largely concentrated in the former slave States of the South-East.

In the last decade -1900-1910 -there has been a considerable migration from country to city and from North to South, which will change these maps to some extent. The relation of the Negro to cities in 1900 is shown by this table from the census: --

Population Classified by Race and Class of Place of Residence and Per Cent. of Distribution, 1900.

| Class of Place of Residence. | Number of Cities, 1900. | White. | Negro. |
|--|-------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Continental United States | -- | 66,809,196 | 8,833,994 |
| Cities having at least 2,500 inhabitants | 1,861 | 28,506,146 | 2,004,121 |
| Cities having a Population of -- | | | |
| 100,000 and over | 38 | 13,507,327 | 668,254 |
| 25,000 to 100,000 | 122 | 5,021,827 | 468,209 |
| 8,000 to 25,000 | 385 | 4,866,928 | 399,295 |
| 4,000 to 8,000 | 612 | 3,098,048 | 274,492 |
| 2,500 to 4,000 | 704 | 2,012,016 | 193,871 |
| Country districts | -- | 38,303,050 | 6,829,873 |

Per Cent. Distribution by Class of Place of Residence, 1900.

| Class of Place of Residence. | White. | Negro. |
|--|--------|--------|
| Continental United States | 100·0 | 100·0 |
| Cities having at least 2,500 inhabitants | 42·7 | 22·7 |
| Cities having a Population of -- | | |
| 100,000 and over | 20·2 | 7·6 |
| 25,000 to 100,000 | 7·5 | 5·3 |
| 8,000 to 25,000 | 7·3 | 4·5 |
| 4,000 to 8,000 | 4·7 | 3·1 |
| 2,500 to 4,000 | 3·0 | 2·2 |
| Country districts | 57·3 | 77·3 |

Number and Per Cent. Distribution of Negro Population of Continental United States by Division of Residence, 1900.

| | Negro Population, 1900. | Per Cent. of Negro Population of Continental United States Living in Specified Division, 1900. |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Continental United States | 8,833,994 | 100·0 |
| North Atlantic Division -- | 385,020 | 4·4 |
| New England | 59,099 | 0·7 |
| Southern North Atlantic | 325,921 | 3·7 |
| South Atlantic Division -- | 3,729,017 | 42·2 |
| Northern South Atlantic | 1,056,684 | 12·0 |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Southern South Atlantic | 2,672,333 | 30.2 |
| North Central Division -- | 495,751 | 5.6 |
| Eastern North Central | 257,842 | 2.9 |
| Western North Central | 237,909 | 2.7 |
| South Central Division -- | 4,193,952 | 47.5 |
| Eastern South Central | 2,499,886 | 28.3 |
| Western South Central | 1,694,066 | 19.2 |
| Western Division -- | 30,254 | 0.3 |
| Rocky Mountain Basin and Plateau | 12,936 | 0.1 |
| | 2,654 | 4 |
| Pacific | 14,664 | 0.2 |

(b) *Sex, Age, and Conjugal Condition.* -In the sex statistics of Negro-Americans one can see easily their social history -the disproportionate number of male slaves imported, the killing of the men during the Civil War and later, &c.

Proportion of Males and Females in every 10,000.

| DATE. | NEGROES. | | WHITES. | |
|-------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Male. | Female. | Male. | Female. |
| 1820 | 5,082 | 4,918 | 5,080 | 4,920 |
| 1830 | 5,074 | 4,926 | 5,077 | 4,923 |
| 1840 | 5,014 | 4,986 | 5,090 | 4,910 |
| 1850 | 4,978 | 5,022 | 5,104 | 4,896 |
| 1860 | 4,990 | 5,010 | 5,116 | 4,844 |
| 1870 | 4,905 | 5,095 | 5,056 | 4,944 |
| 1880 | 4,942 | 5,057 | 5,088 | 4,912 |
| 1890 | 4,986 | 5,014 | 5,121 | 4,879 |
| 1900 | 4,969 | 5,030 | 5,108 | 4,892 |

The median age of Negroes has increased as follows: --

Median Age of the Coloured Population, Classified, Continental United States: 1700 TO 1900.

1900 19.70

1890 17·83
 1880 18·01
 1870 18·49
 1860 17·65
 1850 17·33
 1840 17·27
 1830 16·90
 1820 17·75

The general age composition is as follows by percentage: --
 Native Whites.

Under 15. 15-59. 60 and Over.

1880 42·6 52·9 4·9
 1890 40·0 54·8 5·2
 1900 39·0 55·8 5·2

Coloured.

Under 15. 15-59. 60 and Over.

1880 44·2 51·2 4·6
 1890 42·1 53·3 4·6
 1900 39·5 55·6 4·9

The conjugal condition by sex and age is as follows: --

Per Cent. Distribution by Conjugal Condition for the Negro Population by Sex and Age Periods: 1900 AND 1890.

| AGE PERIOD. | PER CENT. OF NEGRO MALE POPULATION, 1900. | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------|-----------------------|
| | Single and Unknown. | Married. | Widowed and Divorced. |
| Continental United States— | | | |
| 15 years and over ... | 39·8 | 54·0 | 6·2 |
| 15 to 19 years ... | 98·2 | 1·7 | 0·1 |
| 20 to 24 years ... | 64·9 | 33·8 | 1·3 |
| 25 to 29 years ... | 33·4 | 63·3 | 3·3 |
| 30 to 34 years ... | 21·4 | 73·7 | 4·9 |
| 35 to 44 years ... | 13·5 | 79·1 | 7·4 |
| 45 to 54 years ... | 7·4 | 81·4 | 11·2 |
| 55 to 64 years ... | 5·5 | 78·6 | 15·9 |
| 65 years and over ... | 5·0 | 69·6 | 25·4 |
| Age unknown ... | 46·7 | 47·4 | 5·9 |

These statistics can be appreciated only when we remember that there could be no legal family relations among slaves, and that the family therefore is an institution only a generation old for the mass of the coloured people. There are consequently still an abnormally large number of "widowed

and separated," while economic pressure and sexual irregularity is setting the age of marriage very late. The improvement in family life in twenty-five years has, however, been enormous.

The average size of the Negro family is about five persons to-day. The percentage of illegitimacy is not accurately known, but is apparently about 20 per cent. in a city like Washington, D. C., which has 100,000 negroes. It is, without doubt, rapidly decreasing.

(c) *Education.* -According to the United States census, the illiteracy of Negro-Americans has been as follows for persons ten years of age and over: -

1870 79.9 per cent.

1880 70.0 per cent.

1890 57.1 per cent.

1900 44.5 per cent.

Probably to-day about two-thirds of the Negro population can at least write their names and read to some extent.

In the Northern States, with few exceptions, the coloured children attend the general public schools. In the former slave States, where the negro population is massed, there are two separate systems of schools, one for the Negroes and one for the whites. Both systems are supported by public taxation and are supposed to offer equal facilities. As a matter of fact, while the Negroes form one-third of the school population they receive less than one-fifth of the school funds, except in the district of Columbia and in a few cities.

The result is a very inferior and inadequate set of Negro public schools with poor teachers, and poor superintendence. The attitude of the mass of southern whites is still inimical to schools for Negroes, and since the new disfranchisement laws the Negro schools have been more than usually neglected.

As a partial compensation for this neglect on the part of the States there are 132 private institutions for educating Negroes; a few of these receive State and national aid, but most of them are supported by private philanthropy, endowments, and tuition fees. They antedate the public schools for Negroes and represent the original educational foundations which were established by the various church and philanthropic agencies directly after the Civil War.

They are of all degrees of efficiency. Some, like Atlanta, Fisk, Howard Universities, rank as small colleges and high schools doing work of a high grade. Others are high and normal schools. Some, like Hampton and Tuskegee, are trade and agricultural schools, and are rather more favoured by the South than the other schools.

These private institutions have over 40,000 pupils and 2,400 teachers, and represent an investment of \$14,000,000, and an expenditure of \$2,100,000 a year, of which the Negroes themselves pay about 30 per cent. In these schools most of the teachers and professional men and many of the artisans among Negroes have been trained. Their chief hindrance to-day is lack of sufficient funds for their growing work.

There are beside these some 200 small private elementary schools supported entirely by Negroes mostly through their Churches. They are designed to supplement poor public schools.

(d) *Occupations.* -Of the Negroes in the United States in 1900 there were 3,992,337 ten years of age and over who were in gainful occupations, or 45.2 per cent. of the total Negro population. The chief occupations were: --

Occupation.

Continental United States -all occupations 3,992,337

Occupations giving employment to at least 10,000 Negroes in 1900 3,807,008

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Agricultural labourers | 1,344,125 |
| Farmers, planters, and overseers | 757,822 |
| Labourers (not specified) | 545,935 |
| Servants and waiters | 465,734 |
| Launderers and laundresses | 220,104 |
| Draymen, hackmen, teamsters, &c. | 67,585 |
| Steam railroad employees | 55,327 |
| Miners and quarrymen | 36,561 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Saw and planing mill employees | 33,266 |
| Porters and helpers (in stores, &c.) | 28,977 |
| Teachers and professors in colleges, &c. | 21,267 |
| Carpenters and joiners | 21,113 |
| Turpentine farmers and labourers | 20,744 |
| Barbers and hairdressers | 19,942 |
| Nurses and midwives | 19,431 |
| Clergymen | 15,528 |
| Tobacco and cigar factory operatives | 15,349 |
| Hostlers | 14,496 |
| Masons (brick and stone) | 14,386 |
| Dressmakers | 12,569 |
| Iron and steel workers | 12,327 |
| Seamstresses | 11,537 |
| Janitors and sextons | 11,536 |
| Housekeepers and stewards | 10,596 |
| Fishermen and oystermen | 10,427 |
| Engineers and firemen (not locomotive) | 10,224 |
| Blacksmiths | 10,100 |
| Other occupations | 185,329 |

To understand Negro occupations, one must remember that the slaves were emancipated and started as free labourers without land or capital. The result was that the mass of them became serfs and a system of peonage through alleged crime and debt was fastened on them; crime peonage consisted of leasing or parolling prisoners to a landlord who paid their fines or paid a stipulated sum to the State. Debt peonage consisted of keeping the labourer in debt and arresting him for breaking contract if he attempted to stop work. From this peonage larger and larger numbers are escaping; many are going to cities and becoming casual and day labourers; others of the better trained house-servant class are becoming land-owners and artisans, and others through education are entering the professional class. Roughly speaking, we may say that the Negro population consists of: -

- 2,000,000 labourers 1,250,000 farm labourers.
- 2,000,000 labourers 500,000 day labourers.
- 2,000,000 labourers 250,000 washerwomen.

These are a semi-submerged class, some held in debt peonage, all paid small wages, and kept largely in ignorance.

- 1,200,000 working-men 125,000 skilled artisans.
- 1,200,000 working-men 575,000 semi-skilled workers.
- 1,200,000 working-men 500,000 servants.

This is the emerging group. They are handicapped by poor training and race prejudice, but they are pushing forward, saving something, and educating their children as far as possible.

- 250,000 independents 200,000 farmers.
- 250,000 independents 40,000 professional men.
- 250,000 independents 10,000 merchants.

This is the leading group of Negro-Americans. The mass of them have common school training, and there are some 5,000 college-trained men. They are accumulating property and educating their children. Their advance is opposed by a bitter and growing race prejudice.

The exact amount of property accumulated by Negroes is not known.

A committee of the American Economic Association reported: --

"The evidence in hand leads your Committee to the conclusion that the accumulated wealth of the Negro race in the United States in 1900 was approximately \$300,000,000, and probably neither less than \$250,000,000 nor more than \$350,000,000."

Since 1900 the increase of Negro property holdings has been very rapid, as the records in three States show: --

Assessed Value of Property.

| | 1900. | 1908. |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Georgia | \$14,118,720 | \$27,042,672 |
| Virginia | 15,856,570 | 25,628,336 |
| North Carolina | 9,478,399 | 21,253,581 |
| Total | \$39,453,689 | \$73,924,589 |

Judging from these figures, and the report of the American Economic Association quoted above, it would seem fair to infer that the total property of Negro-Americans aggregated \$560,000,000 in 1908.

In 1900 the census said: -

"We find that the total owned land of coloured farmers in continental United States in 1900 amounted to 14,964,214 acres, or 23,382 square miles -an area nearly as large as Holland and Belgium -and constituted 35·8 per cent. of all the land operated by coloured farmers."

Of the proportion of farm ownership the census says that between 1890 and 1900, while the number of Negro farmers probably increased by about 36 or 38 per cent., the number of Negro owners increased over 57 per cent., and the percentage of ownership increased by 3·5 per cent. So that 187,799 Negro farms, or 25·2 per cent. of all Negro farms were owned.

V. Religion. -The Christian Church did but little to convert the slaves from their Obeah worship and primitive religion until the establishment of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1701; this Society, and the rising Methodists and Baptists, rapidly brought the body of slaves into nominal communion with the Christian Church. No sooner, however, did they appear in the

Church than discrimination began to be practised, which the free Negroes of the North refused to accept. They therefore withdrew into the African Methodist and Zion Methodist Churches. The Baptists, even among the slaves, early had their separate Churches, and these Churches in the North began to federate about 1836. In 1871 the Methodist Church, South, set aside their coloured members into the Coloured Methodist Episcopal Church, and the other Southern Churches drove their members into the other coloured Churches. The remaining Northern denominations retained their Negro members, but organised them for the most part into separate congregations.

Practically, then, the seven-eighths of the whole Negro population is included in its own self-sustaining, self-governing Church bodies.

The statistics for Negro churches in 1906, according to the United States census, was as follows: -

"The total number of communicants or members, as reported by 36,563 organisations, is 3,685,097; of these, as shown by the returns for 34,648 organisations, 37·5 per cent. are males and 62·5 per cent. females."

According to the statistics, these organisations have 35,160 church edifices; a seating capacity for church edifices of 10,481,738, as reported by 33,091 organisations; church property valued at \$56,636,159, against which there appears an indebtedness of \$5,005,905; halls, &c., used for worship by 1,261 organisations; and parsonages valued at \$3,727,884. The number of Sunday Schools, as reported by 33,538 organisations, is 34,681, with 210,148 officers and teachers and 1,740,099 scholars.

As compared with the report of 1890, these figures show increases of 13,300 in the number of coloured organisations, 1,011,120 in the number of communicants or members, 11,390 in the number of church edifices, and \$30,009,711 in the value of church property.

It was estimated in 1907 that these churches raised seven and a half million dollars a year. Most of the half million goes probably to pay high interest on a debt of five millions. The remaining seven millions goes chiefly to the support of the pastor, the maintenance of the plant, and general church purposes. A large and growing share, however, goes to "mission" work; part of this is proselytising, but the larger part of it is distinctly benevolence and work for social betterment. No complete record of this work can be obtained. Outside of these money contributions by far the larger part of the benevolent work of Negroes is the unorganised personal work of church members among the congregations. This consists of donations, visits, care of the sick, adoption of children, &c.

The leading denominations are as follows, according to membership: -

| Denomination. | Total Number of Organisations, White and Coloured. | Number of Coloured Organisations. | Total Number of Members. |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total | 142,476 | 36,770 | 3,685,097 |
| Baptist bodies | 32,122 | 19,891 | 2,354,789 |
| Churches of the Living God | 68 | 68 | 4,276 |
| Congregationalists | 5,713 | 156 | 11,960 |
| Disciples of Christians | 10,942 | 170 | 11,233 |
| Methodist bodies | 44,861 | 15,317 | 1,182,131 |
| Presbyterian bodies | 14,226 | 659 | 47,116 |
| Protestant Episcopal bodies | 6,845 | 198 | 19,098 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|-----|--------|
| Roman Catholic Church | 12,482 | 36 | 38,235 |
| All others | 15,317 | 275 | 66,259 |

VI. *Crime.* -Of 125,093 prisoners committed in 1904 in the United States 15.8 per cent. were Negroes, who form 11.5 per cent. of the population. This is not, however, a fair measure of Negro crime, since, on account of race prejudice, Negroes are more easily convicted in court and receive longer sentences -*e. g.*, there were 125,093 white prisoners committed to jail during 1904. On June 30, 1904, there were 55,111 white prisoners in jail, showing a large number of short sentences. On the other hand, there were 23,698 Negro prisoners committed during 1904, and on June 30th there were 26,087 Negroes in jail, showing a large number of long sentences. Over half the prisoners in the United States sentenced to prison for life are Negroes. This might be explained by the greater gravity of Negro crimes, but this does not seem true. The Negro is naturally good-tempered, and the current newspaper reports of the rape of white women are greatly exaggerated. On the other hand, accusation of crime and long sentences for petty offences have long been used as methods of securing cheap Negro labour both for private and public purposes in the South, and of the 2,500 Negroes known to have been lynched for alleged crime in the last 25 years, not 25 per cent. have been even accused of assaulting women.

Most Negro crime arises from the natural weakness of slaves -petty stealing and quarrelling. To this have been added in later years more serious crimes of revenge against whites, altercations arising between employers and labourers, and fights and murders arising from contact of the races.

VII. *The Negro Problem.* -The American Negro problem is the question of the future status of the ten million Americans of Negro descent. It must be remembered

that these persons are Americans by birth and descent. They represent, for the most part, four or five American born generations, being in that respect one of the most American groups in the land. Moreover, the Negroes are not barbarians. They are, as a mass, poor and ignorant; but they are growing rapidly in both wealth and intelligence, and larger and larger numbers of them demand the rights and privileges of American citizens as a matter of undoubted desert.

To-day these rights are largely denied. In order to realise the disabilities under which Negroes suffer regardless of education, wealth, or degree of white blood, we may divide the United States into three districts:

- (a) The Southern South, containing 75 per cent. of the Negroes.
- (b) The border States, containing 15 per cent. of the Negroes.
- (c) The North and West, containing 10 per cent. of the Negroes.

In the Southern South by law or custom Negroes -

- 1. Cannot vote, or their votes are neutralised by fraud.
- 2. Must usually live in the least desirable districts.
- 3. Receive very low wages.
- 4. Are, in the main, restricted to menial occupations or the lower grades of skilled labour and cannot expect preferment or promotion.
- 5. Cannot by law intermarry with whites.
- 6. Cannot join white churches or attend white colleges or join white cultural organisations.
- 7. Cannot be accommodated at hotels and restaurants or in any place of public entertainment.
- 8. Receive a distinct standard of justice in the courts and are especially liable to mob violence.
- 9. Are segregated so far as possible in every walk of life -in railway stations, railway trains, street-cars, lifts, &c., and usually made to pay equal prices for inferior accommodations.
- 10. Are often unable to protect their homes from invasion, their women from insult, and their savings from exploitation.
- 11. Are taxes for public facilities like parks and libraries, which they may not enter.
- 12. Are given meagre educational facilities and sometimes none at all.
- 13. Are liable to personal insult unless they appear as servants or menials or show deference to white folks by yielding the road, &c.

To many of these disabilities there are personal and local exceptions. In cities, for instance, the chance to defend the home, get an education, and somewhat better wages is greater, and mob violence less frequent. Then there are always some personal exceptions -cases of help and courtesy, of justice in the courts, and of good schools. These are, however, exceptions, and, as a rule, all Negroes, no matter what their training, possessions, or desert, are subjected to the above disabilities. Within the limits of these caste restrictions there is much goodwill and kindness between the races, and especially much personal charity and help.

The 15 per cent. of the Negro population living on the border States suffer a little less restriction. They have some right of voting, are better able to defend their homes, and are less discriminated against in the expenditure of public funds. In the cities their schools are much better and public insult is less noticeable.

In the North the remaining 10 per cent. of the Negro population is legally undiscriminated against and may attend schools and churches and vote without restriction. As a matter of fact, however, they are made in most communities to feel that they are undesirable. They are either refused accommodation at hotels,

restaurants, and theatres, or received reluctantly. Their treatment in churches and general cultural organisations is such that few join. Intermarriage with whites brings ostracism and public disfavour, and in courts Negroes often suffer undeservedly. Common labour and menial work is open to them, but avenues above this in skilled labour or the professions (save as they serve their own race), are extremely difficult to enter, and there is much discrimination in wages. Mob violence has become not infrequent in later years.

There are here also many exceptional cases; instances of preferment in the industrial and political world; and there is always some little social intercourse. On the whole, however, the Negro in the north is an ostracised person who finds it difficult to make a good living or spend his earnings with pleasure.

Under these circumstances there has grown up a Negro world in America which has its own economic and social life, its churches, schools, and newspapers; its literature, public opinion, and ideals. This life is largely unnoticed and unknown even in America, and travellers miss it almost entirely.

The average American in the past made at least pretence of excusing the discrimination against Negroes, on the ground of their ignorance and poverty and their tendencies to crime and disease. While the mass is still poor and unlettered, it is admitted by all to-day that the Negro is rapidly developing a larger and larger class of intelligent property-holding men of Negro descent; notwithstanding this more and more race lines are being drawn which involve the treatment of civilised men in an uncivilised manner. Moreover, the crux of the question to-day is not merely a matter of social eligibility. For many generations the American Negro will lack the breeding and culture which the most satisfactory human intercourse requires. But in America the discrimination against Negroes goes beyond this, to the point of public discourtesy, civic disability, injustice in the courts, and economic restriction.

The argument of those who uphold this discrimination is based primarily on race. They claim that the inherent characteristics of the Negro race show its essential inferiority and the impossibility of incorporating its descendants into the American nation. They admit that there are exceptions to the rule of inferiority, but claim that these but prove the rule. They say that amalgamation of the races would be fatal to civilisation and they advocate therefore a strict caste system for Negroes, segregating them by occupations and privileges, and to some extent by dwelling-place, to the end that they (*a*) submit permanently to an inferior position, or (*b*) die out, or (*c*) migrate.

This philosophy the thinking Negroes and a large number of white friends vigorously combat. They claim that the racial differences between white and black in the United States offer no essential barrier to the races living together on terms of mutual respect and helpfulness. They deny, on the one hand, that the large amalgamation of the races already accomplished has produced degenerates, in spite of the unhappy character of these unions; on the other hand, they deny any desire to lose the identity of either race through intermarriage. They claim that it should be possible for a civilised black man to be treated as an American citizen without harm to the republic, and that the modern world must learn to treat coloured races as equals if it expects to advance.

They claim that the Negro race in America has more than vindicated its ability to assimilate modern culture. Negro blood has furnished thousands of soldiers to defend the flag in every war in which the United States has been engaged. They are a most important part of the economic strength of the nation, and they have furnished a number of men of ability in politics, literature, and art, as, for instance, Banneker, the mathematician; Phillis Wheatley, the poet; Lemuel Haynes, the theologian; Ira Aldridge, the actor; Frederick

Douglass, the orator; H. O. Tanner, the artist; B. T. Washington, the educator; Granville Woods, the inventor; Kelly Miller, the writer; Rosamond Johnson and Will Cook, the musical composers; Dunbar, the poet; and Chestnut, the novelist. Many other Americans, whose Negro blood has not been openly acknowledged, have reached high distinction. The Negroes claim, therefore, that a discrimination which was originally based on certain social conditions is rapidly becoming a persecution based simply on race prejudice, and that no republic built on caste can survive.

At the meeting of two such diametrically opposed arguments it was natural that councils of compromise should appear, and it was also natural that a nation, whose economic triumphs have been so noticeable as those of the United States, should seek an economic solution to the race question. More and more in the last twenty years the business men's solution of the race problem has been the development of the resources of the South. Coincident with the rise of this policy came the prominence of Mr. B. T. Washington. Mr. Washington was convinced that race prejudice in America was so strong and the economic position of the freedmen's sons so weak that the Negro must give up

or postpone his ambitions for full citizenship and bend all his energies to industrial efficiency and the accumulation of wealth. Mr. Washington's idea was that eventually when the dark man was thoroughly established in the industries and had accumulated wealth, he could demand further rights and privileges. This philosophy has become very popular in the United States, both among whites and blacks.

The white South hastened to welcome this philosophy. They thought it would take the Negro out of politics, tend to stop agitation, make the Negro a satisfied labourer, and eventually convince him that he could never be recognised as the equal of the white man. The North began to give large sums for industrial training, and hoped in this way to get rid of a serious social problem.

From the beginning of this campaign, however, a large class of Negroes and many whites feared this programme. They not only regarded it as a programme which was a dangerous compromise, but they insisted that to stop fighting the essential wrong of race prejudice just at the time, was to encourage it.

This was precisely what happened. Mr. Washington's programme was announced at the Atlanta Exposition in 1896. Since that time four States have disfranchised Negroes, dozens of cities and towns have separated the races on street cars, 1,250 Negroes have been publicly lynched without trial, and serious race riots have taken place in nearly every Southern State and several Northern States, Negro public school education has suffered a set back, and many private schools have been forced to retrench severely or to close. On the whole, race prejudice has, during the last fifteen years, enormously increased.

This has been coincident with the rapid and substantial advance of Negroes in wealth, education, and morality, and the two movements of race prejudice and Negro advance have led to an anomalous and unfortunate situation. Some, white and black, seek to minimise and ignore the flaming prejudice in the land, and emphasise many acts of friendliness on the part of the white South, and the advance of the Negro. Others, on the other hand, point out that silence and sweet temper are not going to settle this dangerous social problem, and that manly protest and the publication of the whole truth is alone adequate to arouse the nation to its great danger.

Moreover, many careful thinkers insist that, under the circumstances, the "business men's" solution of the race problem is bound to make trouble: if the Negroes become good cheap labourers, warranted not to strike or complain, they will arouse all the latent prejudice of the white working men whose wages

they bring down. If, on the other hand, they are to be really educated as men, and not as "hands," then they need, as a race, not only industrial training, but also a supply of well-educated, intellectual leaders and professional men for a group so largely deprived of contact with the cultural leaders of the whites. Moreover, the best thought of the nation is slowly recognising the fact that to try to educate a working man, and not to educate the man, is impossible. If the United States wants intelligent Negro labourers, it must be prepared to treat them as intelligent men.

This counter movement of intelligent men, white and black, against the purely economic solution of the race problem, has been opposed by powerful influences both North and South. The South represents it as malicious sectionalism, and the North misunderstands it as personal dislike and envy of Mr. Washington. Political pressure has been brought to bear, and this insured a body of coloured political leaders who do not agitate for Negro rights. At the same time, a chain of Negro newspapers were established to advocate the dominant philosophy.

Despite this well-intentioned effort to keep down the agitation of the Negro question and mollify the coloured people, the problem has increased in gravity. The result is the present widespread unrest and dissatisfaction. Honest Americans know that present conditions are wrong and cannot last; but they face, on the one hand, the seemingly implacable prejudice of the South, and, on the other hand,

the undoubted rise of the Negro challenging that prejudice. The attempt to reconcile these two forces is becoming increasingly futile, and the nation simply faces the question: Are we willing to do justice to a dark race despite our prejudices? Radical suggestions of wholesale segregation or deportation of the race have now and then been suggested; but the cost in time, effort, money, and economic disturbance is too staggering to allow serious consideration. The South, with all its race prejudice, would rather fight than lose its great black labouring force, and in every walk of life throughout the nation the Negro is slowly forcing his way. There are some signs that the prejudice in the South is not immovable, and now and then voices of protest and signs of liberal thought appear there. Whether at last the Negro will gain full recognition as a man, or be utterly crushed by prejudice and superior numbers, is the present Negro problem of America.

[*Paper submitted in English.*]

Notes

1 Owing to its special value, this paper is published in full; but owing to its great length and the limited space at our disposal, it appears in smaller type. -Editor.

2 Women 15 to 49 years of age.

3 Women 15 to 49 years of age.

4 Less than one-tenth of 1 per cent.