

These six regions offer very diverse opportunities. The development is bound to be varied. We may, therefore, reasonably expect that the progress of the negro will not be at equal rate in the different sections, and will follow very different lines. Enough has been said to indicate that in some districts the present situation is not specially favorable, while in others a surplus results from present labors. It is not in place to discuss the crop lien system, etc., at length, but it may be said in passing that this system, bad as many of its features are, offers to the poor man an opportunity to at once start in and receive his supplies until the crop is made. He pays a big interest but the security is not good and it must be remembered that the white man pays big interest at the south and gets his money only under onerous conditions. The necessity of receiving advances greatly handicaps any development of diversified farming. In all sections the great criticism on the farm laborer may be summed up in unreliability. Mr. Alfred Holt Stone says: "One of the traits which militates most against the negro here is his unreliability. His mental processes are past finding out and he cannot be counted on to do or not to do a given thing under given circumstances. There is scarcely a planter in all this territory who would not gladly make substantial concessions for an assured tenantry." Agriculture is becoming more and more scientific. The lessening price of the great staple, whose culture the negro understands, makes more necessary the practice of small economies. Is he in a position to exercise these? Regarding the negro farmer let me quote a bulletin of the Farmers' Improvement society of Texas: "Very many (colored farmers) in the first place do not try to make their supplies at home. Very often much is lost by bad fences. Lots of them don't know where their hoes, plows, singletrees, etc., are this minute. Lots of them buy butter, peas, beans, lard, meat, and hay . . . well really, to sum up, if there's anything like scientific methods among the vast majority of our people I don't know it. . . . I venture to say that not one negro farmer in a hundred ever saw the back of one of these bulletins (agricultural), much less the inside." The need of some instruction which will enable the negro to take advan-

tage of his agricultural environment and get the most out of it is apparent. In the opinion of many observers, the negro has a better chance on the farm than in any other occupation. The opportunity is almost endless. The south is not densely populated and thousands of acres of land lie idle either because of lack of workers or lack of intelligence to make them yield good returns. The negro has every opportunity to secure these lands, either at fair price or rental, and because of the system of advances may get a start when the white man at the north must work for a long time at wages to save enough to do his own advancing. I can but feel personally that the farm offers the mass of the negroes their opportunity, although for years to come it may be that their work must be under the close supervision of the white man. That appreciation of the value of constant labor and of the necessity for that reliability already mentioned as lacking, will be gained here if anywhere. But I am anticipating.

We have seen that besides being taught agriculture, the slave was trained in domestic service and in the mechanic arts. What is the situation a generation after freedom? In domestic service the negro has maintained a monopoly in the districts in which he is numerous and in most of the towns and cities. Fifty two per cent of the women in productive employments are servants. The average servant (female) receives from \$4 to \$8 per month and board, good cooks occasionally getting \$12 to \$15. The servant never sleeps in the house but lodges either in a small separate cabin or, more often, at home. The development of the towns has brought large numbers of girls from the country to act as servants. The practice of sleeping outside the houses where they are employed during the day subjects them to many temptations and is an unfortunate element of the situation. The quality of the service, judging from the almost unanimous consensus of opinion, is deteriorating. The children are not trained in the home and do not get elsewhere the training they received under slavery. The evil is, again, unreliability. Their competence is often unquestioned after a period of service; but little reliance can be placed in them. It is interesting to note that northern women who go south filled with the idea that

the negro is abused usually have very great difficulty in keeping any servants at all during the first year or so of their stay.

The old custom of slavery, that whatever is left from the master's table goes to the cabins, is still adhered to and every housewife expects to feed the family of the servant. Those engaging two servants often try to get them from one family for obvious reasons. A friend of the writer in Philadelphia discovered that her girl's husband was being regularly fed from her larder. The servants come in the morning, leave in the afternoon and in some places will not return to get supper. When this is the custom the housewife is helpless unless extra wages solve the difficulty. During the summer, when there is a chance to get odd sums by picking berries and the like, servants are hard to obtain, "Ise restin'" being the response to would-be employers. Writing of Virginia conditions Professor DuBois has said: "There is considerable dissatisfaction over the state of domestic service. The negroes are coming to regard the work as a relic of slavery and as degrading, and only enter it from sheer necessity and then as a temporary makeshift. The servants receiving less than they think they ought are often careful to render as little for it as possible. They grow to despise the menial work they do, partly because their employers themselves despise it and teach their daughters to do the same. Employers, on the other hand, find an increasing number of careless and impudent young people, who neglect their work and in some cases show vicious tendencies and demoralize the children of the family. . . . One result of this situation is the wholesale emigration of the better class of servants to the north." Male servants get from \$8 to \$15 a month. The old body servants naturally became barbers, waiters, restaurant keepers, etc., under the new régime.

The negro artisan, as we have seen, had control of the situation in 1865. It must be admitted that this is no longer the case. Bruce says: "Indeed, one of the most discouraging features in the character of the negroes who have grown up since the war is their extreme aversion to the mechanical trades. . . . The explanation of this antipathy on their part is easily found: such pursuit constrains them to conform more closely than they like to a steady routine of work, which is

more arduous and trying on the whole. . . . Above all, the laborer is not tied down to one spot; if he grows weary of one locality he can find occupation elsewhere. But this is not the position of the young mechanic; his success is largely dependent upon his remaining in one place; he secures patronage by winning a reputation for assiduity and skill in his trade, and it is not possible to earn such a reputation as long as he yields to his inclination to wander."

Booker T. Washington, than whom none could give more valuable testimony, says in *The Future of the American Negro*: "The place made vacant by the old colored man, who was trained as a carpenter during slavery, and who, since the war, had been the leading contractor and builder in the southern town, had to be filled. No young colored carpenter, capable of filling his place, could be found. The result was that his place was filled by a white mechanic from the north, or from Europe or from elsewhere. What is true of carpentry and house building in this case is true, in a degree, in every skilled occupation; and it is becoming true of common labor. I do not mean to say that all skilled labor has been taken out of the negroes' hands; but I do mean to say that in no part of the south is he so strong in the matter of skilled labor as he was twenty years ago, except possibly in the country districts and the smaller towns. In the more northern of the southern cities, such as Richmond and Baltimore, the change is most apparent; and it is being felt in every southern city. Whenever the negro has lost ground industrially in the south, it is not because there is a prejudice against him as a skilled laborer on the part of the native southern white man. The southern white man generally prefers to do business with the negro mechanic rather than with a white one, because he is accustomed to do business with the negro in this respect. There is almost no prejudice against the negro in the south in the matter of business, so far as the native whites are concerned; and here is the entering wedge for the solution of the negro problem. But too often, where the white mechanic or factory operative from the north gets a hold, the trades union soon follows, and the negro is crowded to the wall." Quotations and observations to the same effect might be multiplied indefinitely. As

a rule the negro works for less wages than the white in the same trade. His standard of life is also lower. Negro carpenters and bricklayers receive from \$1 to \$2.50 per day, with an average, perhaps, of \$1.50. The quality of the work is generally inferior in common estimation. The negro working under white direction usually does better work than one alone. A man who has been intimately associated with negroes all his life, Rev. J. L. Tucker, Baton Rouge, La., writes as follows on this point: "A large schoolhouse was recently built here . . . all the digging and preparation of ground was done by gangs of negro men under white bosses. The mortar was mixed, lime and sand and brick hauled by negroes. A white man gave to negroes the exact proportions of ingredients for the cement, cement mortar and mortar for the different parts of the building, watched it done for a while, then went his way and the negro did that work, but the white man came back every now and then to make sure. That negro has been mixing mortar for many years, yet could not be entirely trusted. On the walls of the building were white men and negroes side by side, laying brick; but every piece of nice work was done by the white men. Straight work done by line and plumb the negroes could do, but the arches were turned, pilasters, sills, window recesses, etc., done by white men or quadroons; they could not be trusted to negroes. Let a negro build you a chimney and your house will probably burn down unless you stand over him and make him fill all the cracks with mortar. He may have been told a hundred times; he may have seen a house burn down by his faulty chimney, yet he will not do his work as it ought to be done and as he knows how unless you stand over him. . . . Negroes nailed up the lathing without much supervision. Negroes did the plastering, but white men laid on the hard finish. In my own house in one room the white plaster finish has largely peeled off from the mortar plastering underneath. A couple of negroes were left to finish that room. They knew how, that is, they had worked side by side with white men all their lives and had been told, and been made to do it, a white man prompting, hundreds of times; yet, left alone, did it wrong. . . . They are good helpers, usually docile, proud of their work, and doing good work when

told each separate thing, and told again each time it is done." If it be said that testimony from southern whites is prejudiced, a quotation from a letter of a northern man now resident in the south and employing negro labor may be cited: "I am convinced of one thing, and that is, that there is no dependence to be put in 90 per cent of the negro laborers, if left to themselves and out of an overseer's sight." In my own observation I saw little discrimination because of color, much because of inability to get competent negroes.

As was suggested in the quotation from Mr. Bruce, the trades and the farm have been dropped for all sorts of unskilled labor, particularly in the cities, not only because of greater opportunities but for the social advantages. In every town the ranks of the unskilled are overflowing. Thus has arisen the problem of the negro criminal from this mass of semi-idle men. Many indeed are supported by wives or mistresses and spend their time lookin' for a job. Yet objection to work, to hard work under trying conditions, if it be not the steady day in and day out grind, the negro has little. America cannot show a happier, more cheerful body of laborers than these blacks doing odd jobs about the city, diving for phosphate rocks in the rivers of South Carolina, unloading fruit steamers at Mobile, working on the levees of the Mississippi, lumbering in the pine woods of south Alabama, or digging coal about Birmingham. Free and easy, careless of the morrow, with tempers of children, angry in a moment yet cherishing no revenge; sullen and surly if they feel abused; working for ten to fifteen cents per hour, seventy five cents to a dollar a day; preferring to work three days and play four; the last cent gambled if opportunity offers—an aimless, drifting life with nothing saved for old age—they are the typical unskilled laborer of the south. The cotton of the best lands often is wasted because of lack of pickers. On the wharves of Mobile there is never any scarcity of laborers—the magic of the city which has caused trouble in some northern agricultural districts.

I am not arguing the question whether this oft mentioned unreliability is the result of a lowering of the negro's standard or the rising standard of the white. It may be that in this respect, in quality of workmanship, in knowledge and self

control, there has really been progress. I have simply tried to show that, judged by the needs and demands of the present, the negro is still decidedly lacking. Personally, I am not surprised at this. I should be astonished if conditions were otherwise. The trouble is that most of us at the north are unable to disabuse ourselves of the idea that the negro is a Yankee with a dark skin. Therefore, we think that if all is not as it should be that some one must be keeping him back, some force restraining him. We accuse the southern white man, attribute the trouble to slavery. Something is keeping him back but it is his inheritance from thousands of years in Africa, not the southern white man nor slavery. It is my observation that the southern white in the negro belt will deal with the negro more patiently and gently and endure far more of shiftless methods than the average northerner would tolerate for a day. Of course, there are exceptions—few in number—who say, as did a lumberman in Alabama last summer: "I never have any trouble with the negro. Have worked them for twenty years. Why—I haven't had to kill one yet, tho' I did shoot one once, but I used fine shot and it didn't hurt him much." On the other hand I have seen men enduring and taking for granted a quality of service which made me writhe in agony. We have attempted to hasten natural progress and are impatient at the seeming meagerness of results. Compare the negro of to-day with the negro in Africa, and what a contrast there is!

Judging the average negro by our standards we find him suffering under some serious disabilities. Gross immorality—indulgence in which is seldom a bar to active church membership—bigamy, adultery, and similar offences seldom are heard in the courts; venereal disease widespread. Marriage, a mating of more or less permanence, often without any ceremony, while divorce is equally informal. Crime and insanity increasing. Home life primitive—no regular meals nor common family interests. Children allowed to grow, receiving neither at home nor in the average school any training in neatness, punctuality, obedience, and industry. A people to whom time is no object. A church service advertised at 11:00 may begin at 12:30. Great lack of foresight; as econo-

mists say, an over appreciation of present goods. Lack of thrift—the list is too long already. To his credit we find a personal devotion to one whom he trusts which is faithfulness itself. During war time the families of the soldiers were well cared for. One of the most disastrous results of the years following the war was the alienation to so large a degree of the former masters and slaves. The negro respects and trusts the white as he does not a fellow negro. It would be a happy day for the negro if the white woman of the south should again take a personal interest in his welfare. Greatly to his credit also is the willingness to work, and work hard under white leadership. Slavery taught him to work, but as a race he is not yet ready to work alone and get the best results. In his favor also is that friendliness on the part of the white man, which leads him to prefer the negro as a workman under ordinary conditions. It must be remembered that the succeeding generations will be less moved by this sentiment and will base their preferences on quality of workmanship.

Another factor in the problem which is growing in importance is that of white immigration. Into many southern communities is setting a tide of immigration from the north. White barbers, carpenters, masons, cooks, are making their presence felt. In agriculture the negro has experienced little competition. Yet the rice industry of Louisiana has been revolutionized within a decade. In The Cotton Plant, Mr. Harry Hammond states that in thirty nine counties of Texas in the black prairie region in which whites predominate, the average value of land per acre is \$12.19, as against \$6.40 per acre in twelve counties of similar soil in Alabama in which negroes are in a majority. He says further: "The number and variety of implements recently introduced in cotton culture here, especially in the prairies of Texas, is very much greater than elsewhere in the cotton belt." What will be the result when the white farmer seeking cheap land discovers (as he is slowly) that he can live and work in the richest soil in the country, perhaps—the alluvial regions of the Mississippi river? To-day over 80 per cent of the population is negro; will he be fit to hold his own or must he either surrender the best land or take a subordinate position?

As Dr. Curry has said: "It may be assumed that the industrial problem lies at the heart of the whole situation which confronts us. Into our public and other schools should be incorporated industrial training. If to regularity, punctuality, silence, obedience to authority, there be systematically added instruction in mechanical arts, the results would be astounding." The question of classical education does not now concern us. The absolutely essential thing for the negro now is that he learn to work regularly and intelligently. The lesson begun in slavery must be fully mastered. As Dr. E. G. Murphy puts it: "The industrial training supplied by that school (slavery) is now denied to him. The capacity, the equipment, and the necessity for work which slavery provided are the direct causes of the moral superiority of the old time darky. Is freedom to have no substitute for the ancient school? . . . The demand of the situation is not less education but more education of the right sort."

A great trouble with the mass of schools for negroes is that they have not fitted their pupils to teach the things upon which the negro's progress depends. Hampton and Tuskegee are attempts in the right direction. That they are being duplicated on smaller scales in many districts is a hopeful sign. The state institutions, such as the school at Westside, Miss., and Normal, Ala., are not to be forgotten.

If agriculture offer the best field for the negro, it is a matter of regret that greater headway is not being made in the training of farmers. The training on the average farm is not sufficient, particularly in those districts where a departure from the traditional crops seems to be imperative. Even Tuskegee is not doing as much in this line as generally supposed, in spite of the emphasis I know is being laid upon it. In examining their catalogue I find only sixteen graduates who are farming and of these thirteen have other occupations—principally teaching. Three others are introducing cotton raising in Africa under the German government. From the industrial department nine have received certificates in agriculture and six in dairying, but their present occupations are not given. Asking a prominent man at the Tuskegee institute for the reason he exclaimed, rather disgustedly, that they

didn't like to work and preferred teaching. Tuskegee is wielding great influence through its yearly Farmers' conference and the small local association which meets monthly. There is a similar organization at Calhoun, Ala., which has held fairs, the exhibitors being negro farmers. At both Calhoun and Tuskegee and a few other places land has been purchased in large tracts and is being sold to the negroes at reasonable terms. It is too early to judge of the results of these experiments. In Texas there is an interesting organization, The Farmers' Improvement society, which is composed of negroes. The aim is to stimulate the members to improve their homes, buy land, overcome the custom of receiving advances and to have a distributing co-operative society. A fair is held each year. From the Galveston News of October 12, 1902, I learn that the society has about 3,000 members and that they own 50,000 acres of land, more than 8,000 head of cattle, and 7,000 head of cattle and mules. If the figures are correct they indicate progress. The Hampton Building and Loan association has been very successful and pays its stockholders 7 per cent dividends.

Mr. Joseph A. Tillinghast in closing his chapter on Industrial Progress (The Negro in Africa and America) sums up as follows: "The general conclusion we reach, then, is to this effect, that an overwhelming majority of the race in its new struggle for existence under the exacting conditions of American industry is seriously handicapped by inherited characteristics. Economic freedom has not developed a sense of responsibility and a persistent ambition to rise, as many hoped to see. As a race the negroes are still wanting in energy, purpose, and stability; they are giving away before the able competition of whites in the skilled and better paid occupations, and they fail to husband resources so as to establish economic safety." I think this a fair statement of the facts of the case. If I have indicated some of the lines along which there has been development and the conditions limiting further progress, I am content. Regarding the future, I am hopeful.