

# POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY

## A LOCAL STUDY OF THE RACE PROBLEM

### RACE RELATIONS IN THE EASTERN PIEDMONT REGION OF GEORGIA.

THE northern limit of the ante-bellum cotton belt in Georgia was the tier of counties extending from Elbert on the Savannah River in a southwesterly direction between Walton and Morgan counties to Monroe county and thence westward to Troup county on the Alabama line. North of that line, some cotton was produced, but its culture was not the dominant agricultural interest. This fact determined the character of the population north and south of the line, as is indicated by the figures on the accompanying map (see next page). In the several counties here investigated are given the percentages of the blacks in the total population in 1860 and in 1900. The upper figures are for 1860, the lower for 1900.

The present study is confined to the counties of the eastern piedmont region. The piedmont or metamorphic section of Georgia embraces all that part of the state between the mountainous section (confined to the two most northern tiers of counties) and the fall line, which runs across the state from Richmond county, on the Savannah, through Baldwin, Bibb and Muscogee counties. The soil of all this section of the state is similar in character, consisting of red and sandy lands, with a firm subsoil of red clay. The Census of 1880<sup>1</sup> contains an accurate description of the soil, with particulars as to each county, and an excellent soil map by Loughridge.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi, pp. 277 *et seq.*



TABLE I

GROUP OF CONTIGUOUS COUNTIES IN THE BLACK BELT, SHOWING THE DECLINE OF THE WHITE ELEMENT AND THE INCREASE OF THE BLACKS

YEAR	COLUMBIA		WARREN		HANCOCK		PUTNAM <sup>1</sup>		MORGAN	
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1800 ..	5321	3024	6252	2077	9605	4851	.....	.....	.....	.....
1810 ..	5229	6013	5659	3066	6849	6481	6771	3258	5949	2420
1820 ..	5213	7482	6530	4100	5847	6887	8208	7267	7463	6057
1830 ..	4467	8139	6152	4794	4603	7217	5513	7748	5211	6835
1840 ..	3920	7436	5176	4613	3697	5962	3741	6519	3461	5660
1850 ..	3617	8344	6158	6267	4210	7368	3300	7494	3634	7110
1860 ..	3511	8349	4347	5473	3871	8173	2956	7169	2983	7013
1870 ..	4080	9449	4285	6260	3645	7672	3016	7445	3637	7058
1880 ..	3030 <sup>3</sup>	7435	4039	6846	5044	11943	3518	11021	4249	9782
1890 ..	3243	8038	4201	6756	4739	12410	3939	10903	5043	10997
1900 ..	2900	7753	3842	7621	4649	13628	3379	10057	5207	10606

YEAR	GREENE		TALIAFERRO <sup>2</sup>		OGLETHORPE		WILKES		LINCOLN	
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1800 ..	7097	3664	.....	.....	6686	3094	8032	5071	3326	1440
1810 ..	6398	5281	.....	.....	6857	5440	7602	7285	2331	2224
1820 ..	6599	6990	.....	.....	6703	7343	7838	9768	3378	3080
1830 ..	5026	7523	2162	2772	5659	7959	5265	8972	2824	3321
1840 ..	4641	7049	2295	2895	4506	6362	3630	6518	2527	3368
1850 ..	4744	8324	2051	3095	4382	7877	3805	8302	2187	3811
1860 ..	4229	8423	1693	2890	4014	7535	3434	7986	1675	3791
1870 ..	4298	8156	1809	2987	4641	7141	3969	7827	1797	3616
1880 ..	5573	11974	2312	4722	5469	9931	5173	10812	2254	4158
1890 ..	5332	11719	2464	4827	5686	11264	5616	12464	2473	3673
1900 ..	5325	11217	2391	5521	5638	12243	6423	14442	2883	4273

The counties listed in Table I are typical of the cotton belt, with its large plantations, numerous slaves and exploitative soil culture; while those of the second table are representative of those districts of the South which did not attract the large planter, and in which cultivation was and is relatively intensive and diversification of crops the rule.

<sup>1</sup> Laid out in 1807.<sup>2</sup> Laid out in 1825.<sup>3</sup> Part of decrease caused by portion of the county being laid off, in 1871, to make the new county of McDuffie.

TABLE II

GROUP OF CONTIGUOUS COUNTIES NORTH OF THE BLACK BELT, SHOWING THE  
INCREASING PREDOMINANCE OF WHITES SINCE 1860

YEAR	HART <sup>1</sup>		FRANKLIN		BANKS <sup>2</sup>		HALL <sup>3</sup>		FORSYTH <sup>4</sup>	
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1800 ..	.....	.....	5892	967	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1810 ..	.....	.....	9143	1672	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1820 ..	.....	.....	7240	1800	.....	.....	4681	405	.....	.....
1830 ..	.....	.....	7694	2413	.....	.....	10563	1185	.....	.....
1840 ..	.....	.....	7754	2132	.....	.....	6773	1102	5060	559
1850 ..	.....	.....	9076	2437	.....	.....	7370	1343	7812	1038
1860 ..	4603	1534	6038	1355	3610	1097	8091	1275	6851	898
1870 ..	4841	1942	6034	1859	4052	921	8317	1290	6862	1121
1880 ..	6212	2882	8906	2547	5830	1507	13040	2258	9072	1487
1890 ..	7930	2957	11372	3298	6999	1563	15280	2767	9866	1288
1900 ..	10467	4025	13496	4204	8448	2097	17480	3272	10467	1083

YEAR	GWINNETT <sup>3</sup>		JACKSON		MADISON <sup>4</sup>		WALTON <sup>5</sup>	
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1800 ..	.....	.....	6328	1408	.....	.....	.....	.....
1810 ..	.....	.....	8742	1827	.....	.....	964	62
1820 ..	4050	539	6346	2009	2829	906	3556	636
1830 ..	10949	2340	6180	2824	3385	1261	7762	3167
1840 ..	8552	2252	5994	2528	3125	1385	6583	3626
1850 ..	8952	2305	6808	2960	3763	1940	6895	3926
1860 ..	10358	2582	7249	3356	3924	2009	6447	4627
1870 ..	10272	2159	7471	3710	3646	1581	6876	4162
1880 ..	16016	3515	11139	5157	5392	2586	9321	6301
1890 ..	16903	2996	13780	5396	7391	3662	10312	7155
1900 ..	21442	4143	16433	7606	9339	3885	12601	8341

The three counties not included in either group, namely, Elbert, Clarke and Oconee, lie on the borderland of the black belt, and represent a shading-off of the characteristic population features of the two groups. In these three counties the white and black elements of the population are about equal, as is shown in Table III.

It is the purpose of this paper to sketch the economic his-

<sup>1</sup> Laid out in 1853.<sup>2</sup> Laid out in 1858.<sup>3</sup> Laid out in 1818.<sup>4</sup> Laid out in 1832.<sup>5</sup> Laid out in 1811.

TABLE III

COUNTIES LYING ON THE BORDER OF THE BLACK BELT

YEAR	ELBERT		CLARKE <sup>1</sup>		OCONEE <sup>2</sup>	
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1800 ..	7255	2839	.....	.....	.....	.....
1810 ..	7532	4624	5000	2628	.....	.....
1820 ..	6629	5159	5285	3482	.....	.....
1830 ..	6501	5853	5438	4738	.....	.....
1840 ..	6077	5048	5603	4919	.....	.....
1850 ..	6676	6283	5513	5606	.....	.....
1860 ..	4697	5736	5539	5679	.....	.....
1870 ..	4386	4863	6488	6453	.....	.....
1880 ..	6085	6872	5313	6388	3327	3024
1890 ..	7492	7884	7072	8111	3881	3832
1900 ..	9936	9793	8230	9478	4189	4413

tory of the two groups of counties and to present certain observations with reference to the present condition of the blacks.

### *History of the black counties*

The land that is now cut up into Wilkes, Lincoln, Elbert, Oglethorpe and other counties was settled, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, by some of those Virginians and Carolinians who were pressing southward and westward in search of new lands.<sup>3</sup> Tobacco raising was the principal industry of these people, and the soil of the older commonwealths was becoming impoverished. Wilkes county<sup>4</sup> was the name given to the land occupied by the immigrants; and so rapid was the movement of population that when the first census was taken it revealed the fact that, of the 82,000 Georgians, 36,000 lived in Wilkes alone. The Carolinians who came to Georgia at that time were, as a rule, backwoods, frontier people; but the

<sup>1</sup> Laid out from Jackson County in 1801. Part added to Oglethorpe in 1813.

<sup>2</sup> Laid out from Clarke County in 1875.

<sup>3</sup> U. B. Phillips, *Georgia and State Rights*, pp. 87-89.

<sup>4</sup> See map in Twelfth Census, "Century of Population Growth," p. 69, showing changes in county lines. This map is inaccurate: Columbia county should not have been included in Wilkes, nor was Elbert ever a part of Franklin, having been cut off from Wilkes in 1790.

Virginians, who constituted the larger number and included the more important element—the men who were in the main responsible for the development of this section of the state—were not of the pioneer class. They fully measured up to the current standards of culture. They transplanted to Georgia soil the Virginian civilization, bringing slaves, stock, cattle, household goods and books. One of the ante-bellum governors<sup>1</sup> of Georgia has left an interesting account of the Virginian families, closely related by numerous intermarriages, who settled in the Goosepond district, now in Oglethorpe county, on Broad River. They raised tobacco as a money crop, but diversification of farming was the rule. Practically everything used was produced on the farms. Though slave owners, the immigrants were not large planters—their servants were few in number and their estates were not extensive.

The invention of the cotton gin revolutionized this simple economic régime. Cotton culture on a large scale superseded the diversified farming and tobacco raising of the early days. Those who had the means enlarged their holdings into many-acred farms; the people of lesser economic efficiency were bought out and retired to less desired lands; slaves increased enormously in number and in price. In a remarkably short time what is ordinarily known as the ante-bellum system was established in the section. This development is shown by the figures of Table I, in connection with which the following table of slave prices should be considered.

TABLE IV  
AVERAGE PRICE OF PRIME FIELD HANDS IN GEORGIA<sup>2</sup>

1800 . . . . .	\$450.00	1821 . . . . .	\$700.00 (Panic of 1819)
1810 . . . . .	600.00	1826 . . . . .	800.00
1818 . . . . .	1,000.00		

From 1800 to 1820 the number of slaves doubled, while the white population remained practically stationary. By 1820 the blacks outnumbered the whites, and they have ever since

<sup>1</sup>Geo. R. Gilmer, Georgians, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup>U. B. Phillips, "Economic Cost of Slaveholding," *POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY*, vol. xx, p. 267.

maintained the lead. This development is typical of the economic history of the cotton-planting districts. It was the universal belief that cotton could be most profitably produced on a large scale, by slaves in gangs. Farming being extensive and exploitative, there was an ever-increasing demand for lands and slaves. These two essential factors of production the poor man could not command. Conditions were against the small farmers, and the plantations tended to absorb their holdings. Not all of this class were dispossessed: there were always small farmers: but they were usually not prosperous and formed an unimportant and neglected element of the population.

At each census year after 1820 the white population in the black-belt counties showed a decline. Part of the loss was due to the departure of the small farmer in search of cheap lands, part to the movement of planters to fresher fields. Commercial fertilizers were unknown; and it was cheaper to move on to new land than to spend time and money in the effort to conserve the soil. The number of slaves fluctuated after 1820, in response to market conditions, but tended to remain stationary. The natural increase probably equaled the loss occasioned by the westward drift of planters. The noticeable break in 1840 was due to the crisis of 1839. For several years thereafter the planters made little demand for slaves. With flush times in 1848-1850, the domestic slave trade again became active. The acreage per planter and the average holding of slaves steadily increased from 1820 to 1860, as the plantation régime tightened its grip on the black belt.

#### *History of the white counties*

In the counties of the northern group there was little of the extensive cotton planting which had become characteristic of the black belt. The land in that part of Georgia was not in demand, as it was believed to be infertile. A trustworthy authority,<sup>1</sup> writing in 1849, said of Jackson (which is now considered a good county), that "much of the soil is unproduc-

<sup>1</sup> White, *Statistics of Georgia*, p. 499.

tive." This statement was repeated verbatim as late as 1901.<sup>1</sup> Most of the counties in this northern group were once a part of Franklin county.<sup>2</sup> This huge tract of land was acquired from the Cherokees and Creeks in 1783. The legislature threw open the land for settlement,<sup>3</sup> giving land practically free to all actual settlers. The country filled fairly rapidly, with an excellent class of immigrants of Scotch-Irish descent. They came principally from South Carolina, and were a people noted for "thrift, plainness and independence."<sup>4</sup> The newcomers were of the small farmer class and did not develop into wholesale cotton planters, as did their southern neighbors. Slaves were never numerous in this region, as is shown in Table II. Accustomed to work with their hands, these immigrants settled down to careful, relatively intensive cultivation of the soil, and their land did not become exhausted. Lying outside of the zone of lands sought for by the planter, these counties received the overflow of the non-slaveholding class from the cotton-belt counties of Oglethorpe, Wilkes and Lincoln. Some slaveholders also moved in, but they were of comparative unimportance amid the far more numerous small farmers.

It is clear, accordingly, that in ante-bellum days sharply contrasted systems of economic and social life obtained in these two groups of counties. The southern group was occupied by great planters, who lived in colonial homes, cultivated broad estates with numerous slaves, sent their sons to college and concerned themselves with state and national politics. The slaves, worked in gangs by overseers, learned nothing of economy, management or conservation of the soil. In the northern group, on the other hand, the farmer personally performed the farming operations, raised his own food-stuffs and managed his small place with care and foresight. His few slaves worked by his side in the field, and one can

<sup>1</sup> Department of Labor, Bulletin no. 35, p. 731.

<sup>2</sup> Twelfth Census, "Century of Population Growth," p. 69, map showing changes in county lines.

<sup>3</sup> Watkins, Digest of Georgia Laws, p. 291.

<sup>4</sup> G. G. Smith, Story of Georgia, p. 152.



fancy them absorbing by imitation something of the master's carefulness.

*Conditions since the Civil War*

The emancipation of the slaves inflicted a far heavier loss upon the planters of the black-belt counties than upon the farmers of the other group, for slaves constituted the bulk of the planter's wealth. His whole economic order shattered, without operating capital or credit, disgusted with the difficulty of working as wage-hands the freedmen with their fantastic ideas of liberty, the planter sold much of his land to the blacks on easy terms, abandoned the remainder to negro croppers and tenants, and moved to town. The land was thus largely given over to the blacks, who, after the novelty of freedom had in a measure worn off, settled down to unintelligent cotton planting. Vast tracts went out of cultivation. Lacking the guidance of white neighbors, the negro naturally remained in ignorance of the progress of agricultural science and learned nothing of the use of labor-saving machinery. He had not as a slave practiced economy, and now as a free man he lived from hand to mouth. The productiveness of the soil was of course impaired and farming lands fell in price.

Since 1860 these conditions have tended to become accentuated. In the black counties the ratio of blacks to whites has steadily increased, as is shown by the percentages for 1860 and 1900 given above on the map; whereas in the white counties, the whites have increased their numerical ascendancy. In other words, the white counties have grown whiter, and the black counties blacker. In every county in the black group, the white population was less in 1900 than in 1800, while the black element had increased from three to four hundred per cent. In eight of the ten counties investigated, the percentage of blacks has increased since 1860. The two exceptions are Morgan county, in which the whites are gaining slightly, and Lincoln county, in which the black loss has been notable, amounting to a ten-per-cent decrease. This fact may be connected with the unusually high *per capita* wealth in that county, noted below. Turning to the white group, it is seen from the

map and Table II that in every county the whites have doubled in numbers and in some counties have increased from four to five hundred per cent since 1800. In five of the nine counties of this group the black percentage has decreased since 1860; in one county the percentage has remained the same; in three counties there is a slight increase of blacks.

*Southward movement of mountaineers*

During the last ten or fifteen years a significant change has been taking place in these black-belt counties. The large amount of vacant land and its cheapness have attracted an ever increasing number of mountaineers from the northernmost tiers of counties to the plain. The large estates of the black counties are being cut up and sold to these mountain people. This fact doubtless accounts for the upward tendency of the white element of the population in Morgan, Greene, Oglethorpe and Wilkes counties. In the other counties of this group the white population is falling off or is remaining stationary. Particular inquiry on this point was made in Oglethorpe county, and the following interesting letter was elicited from one of the oldest and most prosperous citizens of the county.

The differences between the races here in Oglethorpe are growing more intense and troublesome. A few years ago in Oglethorpe the negro was the laborer and the white men were "bosses," generally, and workers, incidentally. That has all changed now, and the two races are coming into close competition as renters and day laborers. The negro has almost gone out of certain sections of our county, whites have filled in and are doing the work. . . . In the last few years some of our largest farms have been almost depopulated by the negroes' scattering to cities; and the counties above us, having increased in whites until they began to be crowded, and lands in those counties having gone up, these people, hearing of cheap lands in Oglethorpe, came down in great numbers and began to hire to our people. Those that were able began to buy land, so that land which was ten dollars per acre is now twenty-five and thirty dollars. Some of these people are very satisfactory and make good citizens. Others from the mountains, never having worked very much, do not want to be confined very closely and do not exactly fit in in the cotton fields, which demand much work. I am still holding many negro families, but at some loss last year and

this, by reason of the fact that they are getting out of my control and influence. They do nothing but make a crop, and I have to furnish all their supplies and costly mules, which they abuse in spite of all my caution. The day of cheap labor is over, and even if it could be had it is unreliable and unmanageable. It seems that the larger farmers of Oglethorpe will be compelled in self-defence to sell their lands, because the lawful per cent on the price the lands will bring will be far more profitable than what the farmer can get from renters and croppers.

There are in Oglethorpe county three settlements of these mountaineers: one on the western edge, another in the north-western part of the county and another on the eastern edge.

Supplementary to this movement of mountain people, many farmers from the white group of counties are moving into the black group. Two generations ago the fathers of these men were going in the opposite direction, from the high-priced cotton lands of the black belt to the cheap soil further north. To-day, the skillful and careful working of small holdings by white labor in the white counties has enormously enhanced the value of the land. On the other hand, the negro farmers of the black-belt counties have exhausted the land in some localities and have caused its deterioration in others. Hence, the descendants of the men who fifty years ago moved north are now coming back and buying at a low figure the very land which was once too valuable for their fathers to hold; and by the liberal use of commercial fertilizers and leguminous crops they are building up the soil to its former state of excellence. It may be predicted with some confidence that the coming Census figures on crops and agricultural conditions in general will indicate great improvement in the black-belt counties.<sup>1</sup> This improvement is primarily the direct result of these immigrations; in the second instance, it indicates the effect of competition on the negroes.

The remainder of this paper is the result of an investigation undertaken to ascertain whether or not the diverse history of the two groups of counties and the extreme variation in the proportion of blacks to whites are in any way reflected in the present economic condition of the negroes.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 214, 215.

*The present economic status of negroes in the white counties and in the black counties*<sup>1</sup>

It is commonly believed in the South that negroes are most prosperous where they are few in number as compared with the whites. The Census supports this view as regards ownership of land: "In the Gulf states like Alabama the proportion of owners among negro farmers is largest in those counties where two-thirds or more of the farmers are white, and smallest in the counties where two-thirds or more of the farmers are black."<sup>2</sup> The two groups of counties in Georgia here under examination afford an opportunity to test the correctness of this statement. The comparison has been extended, however, beyond the possession of land: it is made to include also stock, farm tools and machinery, household and kitchen furniture. From the Census<sup>3</sup> and the Report of the Comptroller General<sup>4</sup> of Georgia for the corresponding year the following tables have been compiled. In these tables the county having the smallest proportion of blacks has been placed first. It should be said that the values here given were those returned for taxation, and that undervaluation, although by no means peculiar to Georgia, is carried so far in that state as to give rise to serious complaint. In order to get anything like a true idea of the value of land, the returned values should be multiplied by about eight.

Table V affords a rather striking confirmation of the Census observation. As the percentage of blacks increases the percentage of land owners among them tends steadily to decrease; and with few exceptions the same is true of their *per capita*

<sup>1</sup> Tables contained in the Census of 1900 furnish data for a detailed comparison of conditions in the white counties and the black counties which have been selected for examination in this paper. The effect of a predominantly white population in the northern group is seen in the superior yield per acre of the staples, cotton and corn, the higher value of land, improvements and stock, and the greater diversification of crops. As regards intensity of cultivation, the census returns show that in the white counties the average production of cotton per acre under cultivation was 174.9 *lbs.*; in the black counties, 143.4 *lbs.* In the white counties, again, the average production of corn per acre was 10.2 bushels; in the black counties, 7 bushels. Cf. Twelfth Census, vol. v, table 19, and various tables in vol. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bulletin no. 8, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. v, table 10.

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Comptroller General of Georgia, 1900, table 16.

TABLE V

## STATISTICS OF OWNERSHIP AMONG THE NEGROES OF THE WHITE COUNTIES

COUNTY	PER CENT BLACK	ACREAGE	PER CENT OWNERS <sup>1</sup>	ASSESSED VALUE	VALUE PER ACRE	FURNITURE
Forsyth ...	9.3	1991	20.18	\$6320	\$3.17	\$1469
Hall .....	15.7	3754	12.63	11430	3.04	6698
Gwinnett ..	16.1	2615	9.41	14998	5.73	5122
Banks ....	19.8	3544	11.46	11294	3.46	2177
Franklin ..	23.1	2626	5.04	9539	3.63	4740
Hart .....	27.7	2532	4.71	9135	3.60	3525
Madison ..	29.2	3214	6.25	9860	3.06	4248
Jackson ...	31.6	4924	5.43	25400	5.15	6313
Walton ...	39.8	5143	3.78	22780	4.43	9934
Group ....	26.5	....	8.76	....	\$3.91	\$5.72 <sup>3</sup>

COUNTY	STOCK	TOOLS AND MACHINES	CITY PROPERTY	AGGREGATE PROPERTY	PER CAPITA <sup>2</sup> PROPERTY
Forsyth ...	\$3482	\$554	\$275	\$12,509	\$112.23
Hall .....	7527	1183	12,625	46,082	131.72
Gwinnett ..	10,562	1857	4375	37,919	92.91
Banks ....	6089	1010	575	21,468	66.53
Franklin ..	10,894	2071	1263	30,432	49.02
Hart .....	9268	2350	2250	26,805	46.24
Madison ..	11,047	2318	775	28,622	52.44
Jackson ...	15,078	2580	3190	51,587	58.45
Walton ...	15,039	3292	7860	60,075	56.44
Group ....	\$19.94 <sup>4</sup>	\$3.84 <sup>4</sup>	....	....	\$74.00

wealth. In Table VI the counties are more nearly on a par, except in the case of Hancock and Wilkes, where the *per capita* wealth is unusually high.

Comparing the groups, it is seen that the percentage of owners among negroes is 8.76 in the white counties as against 5.10 in

<sup>1</sup> Percentage of land owners among negro farmers.

<sup>2</sup> The per capita wealth of negro farmers was roughly estimated by deducting the city property from the aggregate of all property, and dividing by the number of negro farms (See Tables VII and VIII).

<sup>3</sup> Per family, families estimated at one-fifth of the total population.

<sup>4</sup> Per farm.

TABLE VI

STATISTICS OF OWNERSHIP AMONG THE NEGROES OF THE BLACK COUNTIES

COUNTY	PER CENT BLACK	ACREAGE	PER CENT OWNERS	ASSESSED VALUE	VALUE PER ACRE	FURNITURE
Lincoln .....	59.4	3733	3.25	\$10,372	\$2.77	\$5751
Warren .....	66.4	2254	2.87	8065	3.57	13,948
Morgan .....	67	5855	4.44	23,208	3.94	8832
Greene .....	67.7	7057	5.67	22,698	3.21	14,461
Oglethorpe ..	68.5	9036	3.17	30,579	3.38	4314
Wilkes .....	69.2	13,621	6.30	52,040	3.82	16,185
Taliaferro ...	69.7	7099	9.65	22,009	3.10	6000
Columbia .....	72.7	6119	6.61	18,825	3.07	3042
Hancock .....	74.5	19,703	6.30	89,555	4.54	12,350
Putnam .....	74.8	5446	2.79	24,590	4.51	5310
Group .....	69	....	5.10	....	\$3.56	\$4.63

COUNTY	STOCK	TOOLS AND MACHINES	CITY PROPERTY	AGGREGATE PROPERTY	PER CAPITA PROPERTY
Lincoln .....	\$15,356	\$3297	....	\$36,056	\$73.43
Warren .....	18,927	4881	\$14,260	63,487	61.53
Morgan .....	19,601	3346	27,295	92,553	52.54
Greene .....	23,509	3748	12,840	77,749	49.70
Oglethorpe ..	17,567	3303	2850	59,396	38.97
Wilkes .....	37,420	7075	58,315	179,430	87.76
Taliaferro ...	18,131	3875	4205	56,192	73.85
Columbia .....	17,463	2873	575	43,875	47.20
Hancock .....	37,202	6844	10,760	173,803	112.90
Putnam .....	23,338	4055	16,670	74,528	55.79
Group .....	\$21.16	\$3.08	....	....	\$65.36

the black counties. Further, the *per capita* wealth of the negroes in the white counties is \$8.64 higher than in the black counties. When multiplied by eight or ten, to get something like a truthful figure, the difference is a material one. The land in the northern group was returned at a higher rate than that in the southern; the negroes of the white counties make a better showing in the matter of household and kitchen furniture—evidence of a higher standard of living—and in the possession of tools and machinery. The only point in which the figures are in favor of the negroes of the lower group is in the matter

of stock. As will appear in a subsequent schedule, the bulk of negro farmers in the black counties are "renters," while those in the northern group are "croppers." A renter furnishes his own stock. Careful inquiry in person and by letter leads to the conclusion that the stock nominally owned by renters belongs in the vast majority of cases to some white man, having been bought on time. The amount of stock to which the negroes of the black counties have clear title is beyond doubt far smaller than appears on the surface. The same condition applies to some extent in the other counties, but not so widely, as there are few renters in the northern group. Where a negro owns his land, his possession of stock is usually real possession. Landowning negroes, in the opinion of their white neighbors, make good citizens.

### *The systems of farming*

The most striking contrast between the white and black counties is in the important matter of land tenure. In addition to ownership, there are two widespread systems of tenure, known as the "cropping" system and the "standing rent" system. The Census groups together as "cash tenants" those tenants who pay a cash rental for the use of the soil and those who pay a fixed amount of the crop. In Georgia practically no tenants pay actual cash, so that in this state the term "cash tenants" means "standing renters." Tables VII and VIII show the prevailing tenures in the two groups of counties. A small percentage of "part owners" is ignored in each county.

Statistics show that the cash-tenancy system is spreading in Georgia and that the cropping system is declining.<sup>1</sup> This tendency has usually been interpreted as indicating economic progress,<sup>2</sup> the emergence of the blacks from "what was virtually the old slavery system under another name," as the cropping system has been described,<sup>3</sup> to a higher position. Under the cropping

<sup>1</sup> E. M. Banks, *Economics of Land Tenure in Georgia*, pp. 88, 89.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Taylor, *Agricultural Economics*, pp. 261-270, for an excellent discussion of share tenancy and cash tenancy.

<sup>3</sup> DuBois, *Negro Landowners of Georgia*, p. 668; Bulletin no. 35, Department of Labor, 1901.

TABLE VII  
TENURES OF NEGRO FARMS IN THE WHITE COUNTIES <sup>1</sup>

COUNTY	PER CENT BLACK	TOTAL FARMS	PER CENT OWNERS	PER CENT STANDING RENTERS	PER CENT CROPPERS
Forsyth .. . . . . .	9.3	109	20.18	7.3	71.5
Hall .. . . . . .	15.7	254	12.63	5.1	81.8
Gwinnett .. . . . . .	16.1	361	9.41	7.4	77.5
Banks .. . . . . .	19.8	314	11.46	7	79.9
Franklin .. . . . . .	23.1	595	5.04	8.2	85.3
Hart .. . . . . .	27.7	531	4.71	18.0	74.8
Madison .. . . . . .	29.2	544	6.25	25.3	67.0
Jackson .. . . . . .	31.6	828	5.43	14.4	77.2
Walton .. . . . . .	39.8	925	3.78	17.2	77
Group .. . . . . .	26.5	...	8.76	12.2	76.8

system the landlord furnishes everything—land, house, stock, seed—and takes half the product of the year as rent. He also commonly feeds the cropper and deducts the charge for supplies from the negro's share; or, in lieu of furnishing him from a commissary, the employer "stands" for the cropper at the neighboring merchant's store. The characteristic feature of this system of farming is strict supervision by the landlord over the operations of the farmer. In reality, the cropper is a day laborer, without responsibility except for the day's work. If through adverse seasons his crop is a total failure, he remains under no obligation to the landlord. The employer takes all the risk. The profits depend on the seasons, the prices, and the amount and character of the supervision the landlord exercises. In point of organization, this system resembles the ante-bellum plantation. Usually, almost invariably, indeed, croppers are found settled on small farms surrounding the residence of the landlord, the cabins close enough to permit the croppers to come in the morning for the stock without undue waste of time. The outlying portions of the plantations, situated at such distance as to make close supervision impracticable, are commonly occupied by standing renters.

Under the standing rent system, the farmer pays a definite

<sup>1</sup> Twelfth Census, vol. v, table 10.



TABLE VIII

## TENURE OF NEGRO FARMS IN THE BLACK COUNTIES

COUNTY	PER CENT BLACK	TOTAL FARMS	PER CENT OWNERS	PER CENT STANDING RENTERS	PER CENT CROPPERS
Lincoln.....	59.4	491	3.25	72	24
Warren.....	66.4	800	2.87	44.3	51
Morgan.....	67	1261	4.44	38.5	55.5
Greene.....	67.7	1305	5.67	41.2	50.2
Oglethorpe.....	68.5	1451	3.17	50	45.8
Wilkes.....	69.2	1380	6.30	55.8	34.8
Taliaferro.....	69.7	704	9.65	58.5	30.2
Columbia.....	72.7	922	6.61	56.9	34.1
Hancock.....	74.5	1444	6.30	64.9	25.1
Putnam.....	74.8	1037	2.79	56.2	39.5
Group .....	69	...	5.10	53.8	39

amount of the crop as rental, say one thousand pounds of lint cotton per house farm of thirty acres. The landlord furnishes only the land and house. The negro supplies his own mule and feeds himself, if he can get credit. In this matter custom varies. Very often the landlord is obliged to "stand" for the renter before the merchant will extend credit; in other cases, the negro is considered as good a risk as a white man—all depending on the individual. Competition among the country merchants is becoming so strong that credit is frequently extended to the average negro without the personal endorsement of the landlord. In such cases the merchant takes a second lien on the crop, as well as a mortgage on any chattels possessed by the tenant. There is a large element of risk in such business, and the merchants exact from the tenants a high rate of insurance.

The theoretical advantage of renting is that, after providing for the payment of rent by planting a certain proportion of the farm in cotton, the farmer is free from the control of the landlord and becomes an *entrepreneur* instead of a laborer. If the white or black standing renter be a man of exceptional intelligence and judgment, he has an opportunity to diversify his farming, and by producing foodstuffs he can be independent in

large measure of the merchant. Unfortunately, the common run of negroes lack the qualities that would enable them to use advantageously the freedom of the renting system. They do not diversify crops. Professor J. F. Dugger, director of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute experiment station, says in a recent issue of *The Progressive Farmer* :

So far as the writer knows, there is no country in the world, dominated by Caucasians and equal in civilization to America, in which land is cultivated in as careless and inefficient a manner as are the rented cotton fields of many planters in the southern states. If the next census should classify the yield per acre by negro renters as separate from the general average of all farmers, I doubt whether the yield of the (renting) farmer would be half of that obtained by the average man working his own farm. If this assumption is true, that the renting system, as more generally practiced, reduces the productive capacity of the land by half and the final profit of the landlord and tenant by more, then it follows that the system should either be abandoned as soon as possible or else reconstructed.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Dugger goes on to suggest, as the first reform, that the planters stipulate in the rent contracts that the tenant shall "sow cowpeas on every acre from which he harvests wheat or oats, and sow cowpeas in all corn grown in upland, as well as in bottom-land corn in some localities." In the opinion of practically every planter consulted, the standing rent system is bad for both landlord and tenant; and the consensus of opinion is that the negro prefers this system, not so much with the view of bettering his condition, as for the purpose of escaping the supervision of the landlord.

For the purpose of the present study it is fundamentally important to note that share tenancy or cropping overwhelmingly predominates in the white counties; while in the black counties standing renting is the prevalent system. There are no exceptions to the rule in the white counties; in the other group, however, Morgan and Greene form exceptions. If the standing rent system marks a step forward in economic evolution, as is

<sup>1</sup> *The Progressive Farmer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, December 10, 1910.

generally contended, it would be reasonable to expect the general well-being of the negroes in the black counties under consideration to be superior to that of the blacks in the northern group; but it is evident from Tables V and VI that such is not the case. When it is remembered that during Reconstruction times the conditions in the black belt were very favorable for the acquisition of property by the negroes, it is the more remarkable that the blacks of the northern group have more than held their own and, in the important particular of land ownership, are considerably in the lead. These facts have led the investigator to question the validity of the opinion that the standing renting system indicates advancement. The truth is that cropping tends to prevail in those communities where the landlord lives on his plantation and gives his whole time to the work of supervision. Unless closely supervised, the negro will not work steadily, nor take care of the stock, nor keep up the terraces, hedges and fences, nor even take proper care of the crop at harvest.

*Oglethorpe and Jackson counties*

In order to bring out clearly this important matter of land tenure, a special inquiry was made in two counties adjoining Clarke, the residence county of the writer. These counties were not chosen as being extremes of their respective groups. Oglethorpe is, however, a somewhat extreme type. The tables given show to what extent they are typical. The choice was made because the two counties are easy of access by railroad and bicycle. Furthermore, both counties are old and are historically contiguous—Clarke having been a part of Jackson, and part of Clarke having been added to Oglethorpe. That is to say, the only difference between the counties is their separate economic development. Another advantage in selecting these two counties is that a number of planters living in Athens (Clarke county) own plantations in Oglethorpe and in Jackson and are thus in a position to speak with authority as regards comparative conditions in the two counties.

Much of the Oglethorpe county farming land is still in large plantations owned by absentee landlords, who reside in Athens,

Crawford, Lexington and other towns in the vicinity. The owners, usually engaged in other forms of business, are unable to be on the ground to watch the farmers. Hence the cropping system is impracticable, and the owners are driven to the alternative, the standing rent system. In Jackson county, on the contrary, the bulk of the farming lands is owned by relatively small proprietors, who live on the land. That 77 per cent of the Jackson negroes are croppers and only 14 per cent standing renters means that the Jackson county landlords are in a position to give the necessary supervision to the blacks and, where they can induce them to work as croppers, prefer this system. The backwardness of the Oglethorpe negroes and of the agricultural conditions in general in that county may be attributed largely to the fact that the absence of white landlords makes impossible the cropping system. This absentee ownership, with the land left to renters, is characteristic of the black-belt counties, with few exceptions. The writer knows, for instance, of a 5000-acre farm in Warren county—one of the lower group under examination—the owners of which live in Athens, visit the place only twice a year and have no overseer in charge. Standing renters occupy the soil.

The negro's success seems to depend directly on the closeness of contact between him and an intelligent white guide. The cumulative evidence of observation and of testimony by landlords is conclusive on this point. It oftens happens that on the same plantation are found closely supervised croppers and unsupervised renters. There is no mistaking the crop of the cropper. The effect of capable supervision is seen in well-kept terraces, first-class crops of corn and cotton and the presence of workers in the field.

The landlords of both counties bear out the Census statement, that standing renting is increasing and cropping declining; and they feel that this tendency represents a retrogression in agriculture.

Apart from absenteeism, which practically necessitates the standing rent system, there is another factor in this movement, namely, the growing aversion on the part of the negro to supervision. He desires his movements to be absolutely unrestricted;

and he does not see that this personal freedom often entails economic dependence. In fact, a hardworking cropper has a better chance than the renter of coming into ownership of land and thus reaching the goal of peasant proprietorship. The Census<sup>1</sup> makes this general statement: "Those states with a relatively large percentage of owners. . . . have in nearly all cases fewer cash tenants, or renters, than share tenants, or metayers (croppers), showing that it is as easy to pass directly from share tenancy to ownership as to stop at the intermediate stage." A more reasonable inference would have been that it is easier to pass from share tenancy to ownership than from standing renting to ownership.

The planters interviewed said that a cropper was more likely to end his year with a surplus for investment in land than was the standing renter. The Census bulletin just quoted testifies to the truth of this assertion: "Metayers usually excel in the value per acre of their produce." But this fact is thus explained: "This means that the metayer's chief object is to get a large crop, and that this crop represents a forcing of the natural productiveness of the soil and a neglect of stock-raising"—the inference being that renters conserve the soil.<sup>2</sup> The writer found no planter in the two counties who did not affirm, not only that the profits of the cropper are greater than those of the renter, but that the land, stock and tools used by the cropper are kept in better condition than those used by the renter.

The Census contains no information as to those economic units known as plantations. This important phase of southern agriculture is being investigated for the Census of 1910; and should a differentiation be made between the supervised and the unsupervised plantations, or between the supervised and the

<sup>1</sup> Twelfth Census, Bulletin 8, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, *Agricultural Economics*, pp. 269, 270, gives a diametrically opposite view, attributing to renters the conduct imputed by the Census to croppers: "The tenant who has a contract for one year is inclined to look too strictly to securing as large a profit as possible for that one year without any regard to the future. As a result of this shortsighted economy, too large a proportion of the land is often devoted to exhausting crops and the larger profit of the one year is obtained at the expense of the profits of future years. The cash tenant (standing renter) sacrifices the long-time average returns in order that his net profit for the one year may be increased."

unsupervised parts of the same plantation, it is scarcely to be doubted that the production on the supervised tracts would be found far to exceed that of the other class.

Of the many stories picked up in the course of several visits to Jackson and Oglethorpe counties, two are given to illustrate this point of supervision. Negroes frequently get hopelessly in debt to their landlords. In order to extricate themselves they go to a neighboring planter and borrow enough to square up with the creditor, promising to become tenants to the lender and work out the new debt. So great is the competition for laborers that planters take on hands under such circumstances and are glad to get them. Mr. H., of Jackson county, advanced a negro, Ben, money to meet such an emergency. The first year Ben was put on a small farm near the house of the owner. He proved to be a good man and paid about half of his debt with the proceeds of his crop; the second year he not only paid the balance but had a margin to his credit. The third year, Mr. H., seeing that he had found a valuable man, put Ben on a farm some six miles distant and did not exercise the same close supervision as theretofore. The result was a complete failure.

Mr. S., of Oglethorpe county, had a negro working as a renter. At the end of a certain year the output was three bales of cotton. The following year, Mr. S. undertook an experiment in supervision. He took the negro as a cropper on the same land, and, by directing his work and keeping him at it, secured from him an output of twelve bales. When the darky's attention was called to the difference between his first and second year's profits, he expressed the opinion that he would have made sixteen bales if the landlord hadn't "pestered" him so much.

#### *Tendencies shown by Census of 1910*

Through the kindness of Dr. L. G. Powers, chief statistician of the Census Bureau, a preliminary report on land tenures in Jackson and Oglethorpe Counties has been obtained. A comparison of the statistics of the various forms of tenure in 1900 and 1910 can therefore be made.

TABLE IX

MOVEMENTS IN LAND TENURE AMONG NEGROES OF JACKSON AND OGLETHORPE  
COUNTIES FROM 1900 TO 1910

	OWNERS			STANDING RENTERS			CROPPERS		
	1900	1910	PER CENT INCREASE	1900	1910	PER CENT INCREASE	1900	1910	PER CENT INCREASE
Jackson .....	45	72	60.0	120	315	233.3	640	731	15.3
Oglethorpe ..	46	100	117.4	725	1047	48.0	665	704	4.8

	PER CENT OWNERS		PER CENT STANDING RENTER		PER CENT CROPPERS	
	1900	1910	1900	1910	1900	1910
Jackson .....	5.43	5.77	14.49	31.11	77.29	59.18
Oglethorpe ..	3.17	5.26	50.	55.	45.8	37.

These statistics bear out the common belief that the standing rent system is increasing at the expense of the cropping system. During the decade just past the movement in this direction has been very noticeable in Jackson county, where the renters have increased 233.3 per cent in number. In this county they now constitute nearly one-third of the total negro farmers, whereas in 1900 they constituted only about one-seventh. There has been a corresponding decline in the percentage of croppers. Turning to Oglethorpe county, it is evident that conditions have been more stable. The standing renters constitute 55 per cent of all negro farmers as against 50 per cent in 1900. Coincident with this significant growth of the standing rent system in Jackson and its comparative arrest in Oglethorpe, the statistics show that the number of landowners in Oglethorpe increased faster in the last decade than in Jackson, although the percentage of landowners to all farmers is still higher in Jackson.

*Negro schools of Jackson and Oglethorpe*

In discussing the various aspects of this subject with a number of farmers who have in recent years moved from Jackson county to Oglethorpe, and with several planters who own and operate places in both counties, it was found to be the general opinion that the Jackson county negroes are more intelligent and business-like than those of Oglethorpe. This fact is attributed partly to the closer contact between the races in Jackson, where two-thirds of the population is white; and partly to the influence of the public schools. In the largely white communities the school facilities are better than in the districts where the whites are less numerous. The reason for this is that in the white communities the public-school fund is supplemented by local taxation.<sup>1</sup> Where such a supplementary tax is levied, blacks as well as whites participate in the improved school facilities, though the former pay only a very small part of the extra tax. Furthermore, the interest of the negro in education increases as we proceed from the practically all-black communities to those where the negro is an inconspicuous factor. It will be suggestive to quote here from a letter received from the county school commissioner of Oglethorpe county:

In some sections of our county, negroes constitute about ninety per cent of the population, and in these sections they take very little interest in schools; will not send their children and will not pay the teacher anything. In other sections, where they constitute less than fifty per cent of the population, they send to school better and will pay teachers from ten to twenty-five cents per month for each pupil.

In Jackson county sixteen districts levy a special school tax,<sup>2</sup> and the school buildings and equipment have been greatly improved. In Oglethorpe only three districts have voted the tax. Oglethorpe's shortcoming is due to the preponderance of the black population. The white people take the position that

<sup>1</sup> School districts in Georgia are authorized, by a law passed in 1904, to levy a special school tax.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the State School Commissioner, 1908; table 5, pp. 504, 505. Two districts have voted the additional tax since this report was made.



they prefer to deny their children increased school facilities (the public-school term lasts only from five to seven months) rather than pay for similar advantages for so disproportionate a number of blacks. That the blacks of Jackson have been materially assisted in this matter by the special tax is evident from the fact that there is in this county one teacher to every 68 colored children of school age, while in Oglethorpe the ratio is one teacher to every 85 pupils. Salaries are uniformly higher in Jackson.<sup>1</sup> In Jackson 14 school buildings belonging to the board of education are valued at \$12,000,<sup>2</sup> while in

GRADES OF BLACK PUPILS <sup>3</sup>				
	FIRST TO THIRD	FOURTH AND FIFTH	SIXTH	SEVENTH
Jackson .....	904	760	140	29
Oglethorpe .....	2000	300	100	50

Oglethorpe 21 such buildings are valued at \$6000. In Oglethorpe 36 buildings not belonging to the board of education are returned at \$3000. The negro children in Jackson ordinarily remain in school longer than in Oglethorpe.

In the first three grades, it will be noted that the Oglethorpe children outnumbered those of Jackson by two to one, but in the fourth and fifth grades the ratio was reversed. Only 2.5 per cent of the Oglethorpe pupils reached the seventh grade, while 3.2 per cent of the Jackson pupils carried their education to that point—a deplorable showing for both, it must be admitted.

### *Testimony of landlords in Jackson and Oglethorpe*

After personal conference with as many leading planters and merchants as could be conveniently interviewed, a series of questions was prepared and mailed to a carefully selected list of a score or more farmers in each county. In addition to inquiries touching the tenures of land and other topics treated in this paper, questions were framed to elicit opinions on the general cause of the prevalent labor troubles.

The most interesting feature of the answers was that the

<sup>1</sup> Report of the State School Commissioner, 1908, table 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* table 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* table 8.

Jackson county planters replied in the briefest possible manner, in many cases with a single word, while a number of Oglethorpe landlords not only answered the questions by filling out the blank form enclosed but wrote separate letters of from five to ten pages. This fact indicates that conditions are worse in Oglethorpe than in the other county. The following is a type of the letters from Oglethorpe:

I think, without some change for the better (and I see no sign of it), the mountaineer will soon have replaced the negro. The younger set think of nothing but gadding about, baseball, hot suppers, church fights and the city court. The quick-thinking farmers of this county are dropping the negro as fast as they can and filling his place with white tenants. I have always had negro tenants and have been a staunch friend to the negro. Have families on my lands that have been with me from six to twelve years, but as the old ones die out the younger set do not take their places. They join the numerous orders and the church, and when they have finished the rounds of the secret orders and the churches, there is no time left for work, and the crop is not worked. The above is the general rule, with very, very few exceptions.

Four Jackson county landlords put themselves on record as believing that the negroes were progressing, and three planters reported no scarcity of labor due to migration of the blacks. It is interesting to note that all these favorable replies came from the northern half of the county, in which the proportion of blacks to whites is smaller than in the southern half. Only two Oglethorpe planters gave encouraging reports. One of these correspondents lives in the same section of the county from which the letter in regard to the coming of the mountaineer was written<sup>1</sup>; the other lives in Arnoldsville, where is located the largest settlement in the county of recent immigrants. While this is insufficient evidence from which to draw conclusions, it suggests that the pinch of competition is beginning to be felt by the negroes.

On the whole the majority of the writers are pessimistic in regard to the present and the future of the negro. It is said in many letters that the younger generation is rapidly becoming

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 202.

unmanageable. The trouble seems to be a deep-seated dislike of control and discontent with farming life and conditions. The tendency is strong to wander from plantation to plantation and to the towns. Various causes, economic and social, are offered in explanation of this condition of things. In Georgia this is an era of unprecedented activity in the opening-up of new and the reviving of old industries—construction of railways (including street railways in the towns), erection of public buildings, paving, installation of waterworks and other civic improvements. The supply of labor for these industries is inadequate, and the result is an exodus of the negroes from the country to the towns and cities. In these employments good day wages are paid in cash, whereas on the farm, except for occasional advances, payment comes at the end of the year—if, indeed, the tenant finds himself entitled to a balance. So high is the price of labor and so low the negro's standard of living, that three days' work in town or on the railroad affords him subsistence for a week. He then usually prefers to rest the remainder of the week. The city of Atlanta has recently taken severe measures to rid the streets of vagrants. Most of them are said to be negroes with money in their pockets. The abnormal condition of the labor market is well illustrated by the following clipping from the daily press. It is peculiarly striking, because it comes from Albany, Dougherty county, one of the blackest counties in the state.<sup>1</sup>

The price of day labor in this section is threatening to soar to heights never reached before. The rivalry between industrial concerns and builders employing large forces of laborers is unprecedentedly keen, and the ordinary workman is in demand. An idea of the extremes to which competition is being carried can be gathered from the case of one enterprising manager of a big plant who made satisfactory arrangements with the pastor of a local negro church, as the result of which the preacher at the Sunday night service announced from the pulpit that the plant which the enterprising manager controlled was offering \$1.60 a day for ordinary labor . . . . The keen demand in the towns and cities is causing farmers no little uneasiness. Labor was scarce in

<sup>1</sup> The population of Dougherty County in 1900 was: negroes 11,228; whites 2451. An excellent sketch of the conditions existing among the negroes of this county may be found in Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, ch. vii.

January, when arrangements for the year's operations were being made, and many farmers have yet to secure the help that will be required before the crops are made . . . . The very high prices which ordinary day laborers are suddenly able to command is inducing many blacks who had signed contracts to work on farms to pay up their indebtedness to their employers and go into fertilizer factories, brick yards, lumber and cotton mills and on building projects.<sup>1</sup>

It is also doubtless true that the systems of farming already described make for discontent in the country. Under both systems, landlords are inclined to insist on the planting of cotton to the exclusion of other crops. To this rule there are gratifying exceptions; but in general the tenant is not sufficiently encouraged to produce corn, hay, hogs, cattle or poultry. All his energies are expended in making cotton. Foodstuffs come from the merchant. The credit system and the lack of diversification in farming are fatal to the negro, and, indeed, to the white farmer.

While such forces as these are at work, the migrations of the masses of negroes are not by any means entirely in response to such stimuli. It has been shown time and again that negro tenants will, wholly without grievance, leave places in which they have advanced from poverty to comparative comfort,<sup>2</sup> simply because they "jest want a change." The blacks are naturally easy-going and improvident. They need the stress of competition and the presence of examples of industry. One of the ablest leaders of the race says: "In nine cases out of ten where a negro in the South is found owning property, he has had an individual white man or a group of southern white men to help guide and encourage him in this respect."<sup>3</sup> The black man's powers of imitation are great; and where his energies are properly guided and he is encouraged to practice self-restraint and prudence—taught to defer present enjoyment for future good—many a black man has become a prosperous and upright citizen. But the population of the southern states is so small

<sup>1</sup> *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 13, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> A. H. Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem*, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Booker T. Washington, in *Atlanta Journal*, January 13, 1910.

and the proportion of blacks to whites so great that, under the present conditions, it is not surprising that the progress of the negroes is slow and that in some sections there appears to be no progress. The greatest need seems to be the increasing of the proportion of whites to blacks. This end might be reached in two ways: first, by the emigration of negroes to other and predominantly white sections; second, by attracting white immigration to the South. The first of these modes of remedying the situation seems unlikely to affect the masses of the negroes; the second holds out promise of greater influence. The profound industrial and agricultural revolution through which the South is now passing will inevitably draw immigrants. The movement has, in fact, already begun; and while some southerners are at present unconvinced of the desirability of immigrants, the advantage of an abundant labor supply will doubtless in time overcome their objections, which are superficial and, in some instances, unreasonable. The establishment of a small proprietor class should prove a great incentive to the negro, pointing out to him the goal to be reached as the reward of industry.

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## SOUTHERN NON-SLAVEHOLDERS IN THE ELECTION OF 1860

MORE than one historian has been puzzled by the attitude of the non-slaveholding whites of the South toward slavery. Dr. James Ford Rhodes, after studying the statistics of slaveholding, reaches the conclusion that less than one-third of the southern white population (6,125,000 in 1850) had any material interest in the preservation of slavery. But even this does not represent the true situation, he continues, for many classed as slaveholders were only laborers who had accumulated money enough to buy one or two slaves and who still worked side by side with their chattels. The real slaveholding oligarchy numbered fewer than eight thousand. In fixing upon this number he takes the ownership of fifty or more slaves as putting their proprietor in the oligarchical class. As for the poor whites, they "looked on the prosperity of the slaveholding lord with rank and sullen envy; his trappings contrasted painfully with their want of comforts." Yet, in spite of the absence of any material interest in slavery and in spite of a real antipathy on the part of many toward the slaveholders, the poor and envious neighbors of the "slaveholding lord" voted as he desired. The reason why they did this was because he knew so well how to play upon their contempt for the negro and

to make it appear that his and their interests were identical, that, when election day came, the whites, who were without money and without slaves, did the bidding of the lord of the plantation. When southern interests were in danger it was the poor whites who voted for their preservation. The slaveholders, and the members of the society which clustered around them, took the offices. It was extremely rare that a man who had ever labored with his hands was sent to Congress from the South, or chosen to one of the prominent positions in the state.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, History of the United States, vol. i, p. 345.