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It is an interesting fact that the large stream of immigrants that poured into the United States of America before the restriction of immigration, for the most part avoided the Southern States. Dr. W.W. Jennings in his "History of Economic Progress in the U.S.A." writes :-

" All immigrants because of slavery, inaccessibility, lack of means, and climate and crops different from those of their former homes tended to avoid the South. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and North Carolina, with a total population of 4,331,000 in 1860 had only 43,000 or less than one per cent foreign born - the same number of Western States, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, with a total population of 7,601,000 had 1,303,000 or over seventeen per cent foreign born."

Dr. Jennings found that right up to 1920 the stream of immigrants had still avoided the South. The Southern states mentioned were still in the same category with less than 1% or only 100,000 foreign born; the same number of northern states had a little less than 15% or 3,500,000 foreign born. In both cases better examples could have been found.

There has been much speculation as to the reason for this avoidance of the South, but although there have been differences of opinion as to whether it is predominantly social or economic, all have agreed that the main cause is the presence of a large Negro Population.

Maurice Evans says (in his "Black and White in the Southern States") "The indisposition of the immigrant to go South is not due to any natural drawbacks. As I have shown, the South has a genial climate abundance of wood and minerals and good communication by river and rail. Above all, land is cheap and may be easily procured." Referring to certain sections of South African opinion he wrote:- "They fail to see that sun and space is not all the immigrant asksthe vast majority hope to live at first by manual toil, going on from that, and they consciously, or semi-consciously pass by any country in which they must compete with a backward race, and live as they do."

Huge streams of immigrants are composed mainly of the poor. They emigrate to seek for better opportunities. They desire to find in the country of their adoption, an economic and social ladder, whether in agriculture or in industry. A ladder which, beginning as labourers at the bottom they can climb to reach the independence it offers at the top.

In South Africa there is no such ladder. There is instead a deep gulf between the native workers who toil at the bottom and the small number of skilled men who hold the citadel of independence at the top.

This matter was also referred to by the Economic Commission (which was under the Chairmanship of a noted British economist - Professor Chapman.) The report, page 26, contains the following :-

"On the supply side it would seem natural that unusually good prospects would be required to induce the immigration of suitable people, owing to the strange social and economic conditions associated with the presence in the country of masses of non-white labour. The average man feels an instinctive revulsion from what is unfamiliar. Moreover, the fact that there is no normal place for white men in the lower or unskilled ranks of labour may play some part, if no leading part, in holding back immigrants, for the absence of a second line of defence so to speak, against destitution renders the position of the workman one of some anxiety."

Some Notes on the position of the Negroes in the Southern States, and in the United States as a whole.

Dr. W. Jennings, in "History of Economic Progress in the U. S. A. writes:

" After the break up of the Plantation system many of the Negroes received parts of the large farms as tenants. They were in reality little more than hired men, and received a share of the crops, from a third to two thirds, rather than a fixed wage. The land-owner usually advanced the seed, the tools, the mules, the feed and often corn-meal and bacon for the tenants family. In time, however, a better class of tenants, who became the owners of their animals and implements, developed.... At the close of the Civil War, Southern Negroes had almost no land and practically no experience as farm owners or tenants; neither had they any chance of becoming farm owners through inheritance of land or money; but in spite of these handicaps, 746,715 farms in the U.S.A. in 1900 were operated by Negroes, chiefly in the South.

The value of farm property on June 1st. 1900, was about 547,000,000 dollars. The average size of the Negro farms was 55.9 acres, the value of products of the farms about 732 dollars. The following figures illustrate the changed position in 1920 :- The total value of farm property was about 2,969,000,000 dollars and the average value per farm 3,125 dollars, of which about two-thirds represented the land and improvements, about one seventh building, one ninth livestock and the rest implements and machinery. The number of negro farms had grown to 923,000 of which 19.3 % were operated by owners, 4.2 % by part owners, 0.2 % by managers, 19.3 by cash tenants, and 53.3 % by share tenants. The average size of the coloured farms was about 47 acres; for owner farms it was 72 acres, and for tenants 39. The corresponding figures for white farmers were 166;168 and 136 respectively.

The average percentage of farm land which was improved was for white farmers in the United States, 52% and for Negroes, 65%. In the Southern States the figures were 42 % and 67 % respectively.

In 1860 homes owned by Negroes numbered approximately 12,000; in 1900, 320,000; in 1924, 660,000; farms operated increased in the same period from 20,000 to 1,000,000, and businesses conducted grew from about 2,000 to 65,000. Wealth accumulated increased during the present century from about 300,000,000 dollars to 1,700,000,000 dollars. Great progress was also made in education. In 1860, about 90 % of the negroes were illiterate, in 1900, about 44%, but in 1924, only 20%. (In South Africa in 1921, 88.6 % of the natives could neither read nor write.)

The fear is often expressed that the raising of the native economic status and the throwing open of white areas to native penetration would give rise to many social dangers. There is no evidence that this has been the case in the United States. On the contrary, it has been emphasised by students of this problem that increased prosperity, by giving the natives an independent racial status has actually diminished the evils referred to.

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