

of native interests had reasserted itself over the selfish aims of European settlers. Such conservative organs as the *London Times*, *Fortnightly Review*, and *Nineteenth Century* commend the general tenor of the report. Henri Labouret, the noted French colonial expert, hails it as equal in importance to the report of the Simon Commission on India. Dr. Buell, one of America's leading authorities on Africa, ranges himself among those who speak with almost unstinted praise of this report.

Not even the most sanguinely optimistic friends of Africa would venture to assert that the report will be adopted and applied *in toto*. Any prediction at the present time would be particularly premature in view of the recent change in government in England. One thing, however, the report has accomplished. It has reasserted the principle of the paramountcy of native interests over those of European settlers. The policy of West Africa, the liberal farseeing policy, has conquered the reactionary, ostrich-like policy of South Africa. Ramsay MacDonald and the Labor Party have a splendid opportunity to show their sympathy toward black labor.

## AMERICA'S RACE PROBLEM\*

BY ROBERT T. KERLIN

"THE greatest challenge that ever confronted the statesmen of any country": I repeat a commonplace. But I have no sooner written the words than I think of India, Egypt, South Africa, China, the Philippines, and all the South and Central American republics. Let its relative importance alone, then, and consider only some of its aspects.

The present outlook as regards interracial relations in the United States holds forth the promise of better things and the threat of worse, depending on the region contemplated. In the South: vast improvement, attended by occasional set-backs—such as the revival of lynching in 1927. In the North: increasing friction, uncertainty, alienation. Contradictions, however, in both regions, stare at one and put him down the moment he makes a generalization. And we are all uneasy in our hypocrisy in this Christian land. As for the future, none dares predict, except with misgivings.

To understand the conditions, South and North, a brief glance at recent history is necessary. The great migration of Negroes from rural districts of the South to industrial cen-

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tres, chiefly, but not exclusively, North, is the first important fact in this history. This movement of Negroes from the farms to the cities is only another evidence that they are subject to the same laws of life as other people. The urban trend is general, but there are special causes in their case beyond the general causes. Higher wages, yes; better educational opportunities, yes; social amenities, yes; greater security of life and property, decidedly, yes, they fancy. But this last motive carries them generally across the Mason-and-Dixon Line, immemorial boundary, first of slavery, then of lynching.

Not so spectacular as the great racial treks out of Asia into Europe or from the Northern woodlands into the rich plains above the Mediterranean, yet this Northern migration of the Negro is none the less real and no less multitudinous; a million, say, in the last ten or twelve years. And still they migrate. The reality of it has quickened the "conscience" of the Southern planter, merchant, banker. The market value of the Negro has suddenly mounted. Laws, with heavy penalties attached, are enacted in the Southern States against enticing him out. Better schools are being provided. Chambers of Commerce are exerting themselves to the utmost to create a better attitude and better treatment. The newspapers, faithful agents of said Chambers, index the change. The South wants the Negro. No other class of workers can serve the South so well—render such service at such minimum of cost. Land-owner, mill-owner, mine-owner, merchant, banker, contractor, petty magistrate, policeman—all want to keep the Negro in the South: he is money in their pockets. Hence, improved conditions, and a better outlook ahead.

But how is it with the newcomer in the Land of Promise? Better, indisputably: but the milk and honey hardly flow. Race riots have occurred, even lynchings; denial of civil rights is common; segregation is on the way, striding. Instances abound in confirmation. The North has awakened, overnight, to the knowledge that it has a race problem on its hands. It was totally unprepared for it. There is Harlem—all the world knows about Harlem. But a dozen Northern cities have each its Harlem: Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and a hundred lesser places. Segregation into over-crowded residential districts, dirty, shabby, slummy: segregation in the elementary grades of the schools; segregation in theatres—undesirable seats; exclusion from hotels. Yes, friction is inevitable; conflicts are certain; and they occur.

Will conditions improve? Not before they are much

worse. Consider the industrial field. Our restrictive immigration laws will make the Northern industrialist, unable to smuggle in all the labor he wants, continue to bid for the Negro. The influx from the Black Belt will increase rather than diminish. This means clashes with labor groups on the ground—Italian, Pole, Slovakian, etc. For the Negro, non-unionized, has been used as a strike-breaker. "Shame!" Yes, but that's the way of our civilization. The American Federation of Labor has only partly awakened to the gravity of the situation. Altogether too faintly it has declared for equality of races in the unions. The Pennsylvania Federation, under more enlightened leadership, has declared emphatically for the principle and is practising it.

"But as Negroes acquire property, education, respectability—" No. These acquisitions only increase the points of contact and intensify the competition and the conflict. So long as the Negroes in the North were few and college-bred the Northern whites were pleasant toward them. Their tune has now changed. Property, education, respectability will not permit the Negro to be content without the immunities and privileges that go with these all the world over. It will vex the North to concede them. In the South, since the World War, interracial committees have functioned to smooth out difficulties between the races and mitigate grievances. In general the North should learn from the South what to avoid: in this case it will be wise to adopt.

The national societies with headquarters in New York City, and with both races on their directorates, perform large and efficient services for the improvement of conditions. These are the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which gives its chief attention to legislation and legal justice, and the National Urban League, which devotes itself to general welfare, but housing and industrial conditions in particular. Each of these societies publishes a magazine, not merely as an organ of its work, but as an expression of the new cultural life of the Negro. They are *The Crisis* and *Opportunity*.

Largely as a result of the World War there has come forth the New Negro. He is youthful, ambitious, educated, talented. Thousands of Negro youth of both sexes annually graduate from good high schools, hundreds from colleges, scores from technical and professional schools. They are winning the highest degrees and honors our educational institutions offer. The New Negro is going to become very numerous. There shall be need, in consequence, of a New White Man.

In every field of achievement— science, art, literature, the trades, business— there is evidence of a Negro Renaissance. Space will not permit me to adduce proof, but the proof abounds. I should have liked to devote my entire space to the new literature of the Negro. Next to that in appeal is the new literature about the Negro. And then what sudden distinction in the Broadway theatres.

Of the Negro politically, one word. Here, too, is a new man. Formerly bound to the Republican party as the party of emancipation, the descendant slave is declaring his political freedom.

The enlightened American Negro is identifying his interests with the interests of all the peoples of African descent in every land and clime. He is studying world politics, and his horizon encompasses the five continents and seven seas. Of this fact the supreme Caucasian mind may well take thought. One further word of caution. It pertains to the cinema. The day of caricaturing the Negro is passing in America: is Europe to be entertained by a racial slander that America has gained the wisdom to repudiate? One may as well trust the cinema for a true picture of the cowboy. Against the average American tourist another caution might be whispered. He and the cinema are about on a par with respect to conscience and culture. One's caricature is as grotesque as the other's.

The solution of the problem? Education. The education of the whites.

## EDITORIALS

Summer  
Campaign 1929

The confidence of friends in the Hampton Institute enterprise is one of its most precious possessions. The connecting link between the school and its friends is consequently of extreme importance.

The Campaign Department of the Institute in its regular round of yearly activity visits New England each summer where so many gather for the vacation season. This year the trip covered a shorter period of time with fewer meetings, but was none the less effective. Once again we of Hampton express our gratitude to the friends who have opened their houses for Hampton meetings and who in so many ways have strengthened the efforts of the Institute to keep before the public not only the financial needs of the Institute but the ideals and purposes of Hampton and progress in the field of Negro education.

The special speakers on this trip were Mr. Asa Sims and