

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Black and White in the Southern States; a Study of the Race Problem in the United States from a South African Point of View. By MAURICE S. EVANS. London and New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1915. 8vo, pp. 228. \$2.25.

Wherever the black man has met the white, whether in America or in Africa, a race problem has arisen. This problem is not everywhere the same. It has taken different forms in different places. The racial tensions in the United States, in Brazil, and in the West Indies are not the same, but they all exist. It has been said that there is no race problem in South America, but this is just as far from the truth as the assertion that there is no race problem in West Africa.

In the southern states, however, and in South Africa, the constellations of forces, which we call the race problem, while not identical, exhibit nevertheless striking similarities. This is what lends interest to the present volume.

In West Africa, as in the West Indies, the problem is, on the whole, determined by the fact that the relation of the races is that of white capital and black labor. In South Africa, as in the United States, the white man is not merely a capitalist, but he is at the same time a laborer. It is this fact, namely, that the masses of the whites are in competition with the masses of the blacks, which has brought about a racial situation more critical, perhaps, than in any other part of the world.

In the tropics an equilibrium has been established between the races. It has taken the form of a caste system with the black laborer on the bottom and the white capitalist at the top, and with the mulatto as a sort of racial buffer, occupying a status between the two. In our country and in South Africa the interests of caste and the natural antagonisms of race are complicated with economic interests. On the whole, economic forces run counter to race prejudice and the interests of caste. It is just this conflict of motives, not always fully appreciated, which has intensified the racial struggle and rendered the outcome dubious.

For the author of this book there is only one satisfactory solution. In the interests of both races racial barriers must be maintained. There must be no amalgamation. The problem is: How shall the races be

kept apart in their social, perhaps also in their political, relations, at the same time that both are assured full freedom to learn, to labor, and to live, each according to its separate racial ideal?

The conditions are somewhat different in South Africa and the United States. In South Africa it is possible to segregate the races and set them apart each in its own territory. In the United States the life of the Negro is so intimately interwoven with that of the white man that no such solution is possible. One of the things that particularly interested the author in his travels through the southern states was the frequency with which he found the black man working side by side with the white in some one of the skilled trades. This was so far from what he was accustomed to see and what he had expected that it struck him as a deviation from the natural order. In South Africa a white man would no more work side by side on an equality with the black man than he would sit down to table with him in the southern states.

The author is in agreement with most students that the Negro is at his best in the rural regions of the South and he believes that here he should be given every opportunity to purchase land and to become an independent cultivator of the soil. While apparently sympathetic toward the plans for local segregation in the cities, as well as toward that segregation which already exists in the trades and professions, he believes that segregation in the agricultural districts, as urged by Clarence Poe in North Carolina, is unpractical and not wise. What gives force to this opinion is that it is written in full sympathy with the best opinion of the South and is the fruit of an extended journey of observation and study through the southern states.

Much of the discussion of this book, however, is based on an assumption which does not exactly conform to fact, the assumption, namely, that the Negro has no talent for business and hence that there is little possibility that a capitalist class will ever establish itself within the limits of the Negro race. Such an opinion, it seems to me, must have been formed without taking account of the commercial progress of the Negro in recent years, and without consideration of the fact that in America today the Negro no longer represents, as in fact he never did, a pure racial type. The mulatto class is already large and is steadily increasing. There is a considerable number of Negro men and a larger number of Negro women in the Negro race who could easily and do occasionally pass for white. The Negro in America today is less a race than a nationality, that is, a people of different ethnic strains—Negro

mingled with Scotch, Irish, and Indian—but bound together by a common tradition. There is no reason to presume that there is not in the American Negro every capacity possessed by any other peoples, no matter what we may be disposed to say about the original Africans.

It should be remembered, also, that the Negro has some peculiar advantages not possessed by the white man, not even by the Jew, in trading with his own race. He knows his own people as no white man can. He meets them in the lodge and church. More and more, also, Negroes are beginning to realize that they have a common cause.

All this makes it seem likely that the Negro will in time develop a middle class of business men and small capitalists. In fact there is already such a class, as yet small, but increasing. How far the status of the race will be modified under the influence of such changes it is difficult to predict. At any rate the present tendency of the race in the southern states is to establish a social and economic organization parallel to that of the white man, an organization in which the Negro has not merely his own schools, churches, lodges, and newspapers, but also his own banks and business organizations, even his own towns. In these towns, at any rate, he has frequently gained a political autonomy which he does not elsewhere possess.

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The British Coal Trade. By H. STANLEY JEVONS. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1915. 8vo, pp. xii+876. \$2.25.

The importance to Great Britain of an industry which supports five millions of people, which supplies power for practically all the manufacturing industries of the country, which constitutes one of the outstanding advantages to British shipping, and which furnishes approximately 10 per cent of the total exports produced within the kingdom, can scarcely be overestimated. Professor Jevons, during his term of service at the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, has had ample opportunity of studying the subject in hand, and his new book takes into account practically every phase of the coal industry. The work represents a judicious division of attention between the technical or mechanical and the human sides of the subject. Besides a detailed account of the geology of the coal areas and of the mining and marketing of the coal, the book contains a lengthy description of the actual life and working conditions of the miners, their wage difficulties, and their labor organizations. In the concluding chapters the writer indulges in some