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"AT THE CROSSROADS"

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Part II.

LAST month we confined our efforts to arrive at a plan of solution to the first of the two main headings under which we have grouped the existing possibilities of solution or readjustment, namely:

(1) *The probability of an ultimate peaceful, just and honorable solution between the white and Negro people in residence side by side in America.*

The method used was that of elimination. The possibilities discussed included "education," "acquisition of property," "alliance with white labor," "exercise of franchise," "industrial and commercial development," and "shifting North of the Negro population."

Our opinion of the various possibilities grouped under this heading was summed up in the following paragraph:

As to number One, we do not say that it is not possible. But we do say, and most emphatically, that it is highly improbable. Neither in the ample records of history, nor in the light of contemporary experience is there aught that would give to the logical, honest, truth-seeking mind the slightest hope of the probability of solution along the lines of number One. Stronger has never yet voluntarily relinquished his strangle hold upon weaker. As in the days of Pharaoh and the Children of Israel, so through the numerous pages of history to the present day. Our experience has been as harsh as that of other weak groups. No more, no less. And what is there to guide our faltering feet if not "the lamp of experience?"

This month we propose to discuss the second of the two main headings, namely:

(2) *The alternative if such a probability (see No. 1) does not exist or is not sufficiently strong to warrant our staking the future of our race and children upon it.*

The method of elimination will also be used here. Under this second heading may come such suggestions as (a) the turning over to the Negro of one of the 48 States in which he may enjoy local autonomy, (b) a free Negro State out of territory now included in the United States, (c) the erection of a Negro buffer State between Mexico and the United States from territory coming from both countries, (d) Negro migration for the purpose of State building, to Haiti, South America, Mexico or Africa.

Now, while these suggestions are all based upon the vital racial necessity for autonomy ("government of the Negro, by the Negro and for the Negro") we can very quickly eliminate *a* and *b* as unsatisfactory both to the Negro and the white man. From the Negro standpoint *a* would give rise to too many serious complications and would encourage and facilitate discrimination against him on the part of the other States and their white populations who would have an overwhelming preponderance in the House of Representatives. Nor is *b* any more promising. A free Negro State anywhere between Mexico and Canada, unless it be in California, would be far too vulnerable for permanent independent existence. The topography of North America, unlike that of Europe, does not favor the existence of many independent States.

Our consideration of *a* and *b* has been so far solely from the Negro viewpoint and interests. From the white viewpoint and interests both would be unsound and of potential menace, for the white man already sees the trend of the darker races towards alliance in determined opposition of white domination. Furthermore, even were an American Government to sponsor either *a* or *b*, it would find it a difficult, if not impossible, task to pre-empt the white population from any State which may be chosen for the purpose. Even in Mississippi the white minority would protest and would be supported in their objections by all the whites of the other Southern States and by most of the Northern whites.

In *c* the difficulties would be even greater, since to the domestic problem of how to pre-empt the white population would be added the international problem of getting Mexico to consent to the arrangement. Furthermore, from the Negro viewpoint and interests a Negro State must have fairly safe, natural boundaries and be of a size sufficient not only to support the present Negro population of the United States, but its natural and immigrant increase as well.

To us it would seem that the only solution lies in *d*: Negro migration for the purpose of State building. But even this question is complex, for to what country shall we migrate? Not that there are not several countries to which we could migrate, but rather that we must decide which of these countries can best meet the needs of the situation. The island of Haiti, while near and

capable of supporting a population of over twenty million (present population about three million) does not offer us the potential reinforcements of man-power held out by the motherland, Africa, and to lesser degree by South America. Mexico, nearer yet, is in too turbulent a state for consideration.

Between South America and Africa, the choice would undoubtedly be Africa on the basis of both sentimental attachment and strategic requirements and vastness of resources. But most of the gates to Africa are at present in the hands of the European robbers. Only Liberia is still open to the New World Negro. And Liberia is not sufficiently developed industrially to be able to take care of any large influx of immigrants. Her position, too, is somewhat unfortunate. While she has an interior plateau that is as healthy as any other part of the world, the low coastlands, being so near the Equator and cursed with disease-breeding mangrove swamps (which, however, could be drained) are unhealthy and require a trying and often fatal process of acclimatization. In the East, Abyssinia, with its Negro government and fine cool climate, is cut off from the sea by the surrounding holdings of France, Britain and Italy. Migration to Abyssinia is, however, not impossible, but certainly mass migration would arouse the suspicions of the Powers surrounding her and then it would become a question of whether those Powers considered themselves strongly enough entrenched in East Africa to imitate the Italian attempt that ended with such disaster to Italian arms at Adowa. Or would Abyssinia be sufficiently organized to effectively resent any action that these Powers may take to prevent Negro migrants from reaching her territory?

Of course, with money to back the project and a vanguard of expert artisans to precede the first wave of migration, most of the handicaps of Liberia could be removed and that country put upon an industrial basis that would enable it to absorb and accommodate any number of Negro migrants from America. And, as these migrants and the industrial prosperity they would create would very soon make of Liberia a powerful nation in the sense of organized and potential force, European tenure would likely soon become impossible in the face of the rising tide which Liberian precept and example would inspire. Certainly European tenure could not survive Liberian military opposition should Liberia find it possible to train and equip an army of one hundred thousand and to keep pace with aerial development

for her protection from enemy planes and warships. But these are merely hopes, wishes and surmises and we are endeavoring to deal with existent realities.

Upon the basis of existent realities, then, it is obviously South America which offers us the best field for the purpose of state-building.

This continent duplicates all of the advantages of Africa save that of immense man-power reserve. It is immensely rich in ratio to its size, being the next smallest continent to Australia, while Africa is the second largest. It is well served by navigable rivers, and in a high state of industrial development. It possesses a healthy climate throughout, and has a highly strategic commercial situation, lying between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. The colored races are in the majority in the population of South America, which fact accounts for the absence of race prejudice. The known Negro population is over ten million, and Negro blood has been indiscriminately mixed with white and Indian, and the latter with white until now there is a large mixed population.

The industrial development of South America enables it to absorb large numbers of migrants each year. Agriculturists would find an eldorado in the Brazilian portion, as in Brazil so great has been the rubber fever that agriculture has been badly neglected and the price of foodstuffs as a result is extremely high.

Naturally, a strong Negro State, covering all or most of the South American continent, would exert a mighty influence upon the future of Africa, as the racial inspiration which Africans would derive from the existence of a free and powerful Negro State in the New World would be incalculable, and certain to influence them to unite and offer most determined opposition to European domination. Nor would the help be negligible which such a State could give to Africans fighting for their liberty. And with African liberty effected and Africa returned to the Africans two rich continents would be dominated by the African races, as well as various islands of the sea necessary to the adequate defence of these continents, among which would be the West Indian islands, in themselves a rich possession, and by virtue of Negro population and Negro suffering a heritage of the race.

It is thus seen that migration would lead not only to an escape from galling and degrading serfdom, but to a glorious and proud future as well.

TALKING POINTS

Besides the collegiate course in agriculture, Hampton Institute now offers a short course of twelve months for those who have not the time or money to spend for a longer course. This short course is so arranged that the student may work on the farm, in the field, and in the various departments, including the dairy, poultry department and horse barn during the year, and also receive some classroom instruction in agriculture.

J. H. Blount, of Forrest City, Ark., will campaign for election as Governor of that State.

The Commercial Bank and Trust Company, Richmond, Va., is being promoted under a capitalization of \$100,000, surplus \$12,500. T. C. Erwin, president.

The Federal Building and Loan Association of Washington, D. C., is capitalized at \$100,000, with J. Edward Rattley, president.

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