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The Negro in Manufacturing

and Mechanical Industries

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The Negro in Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries.

For some years back the minds of thoughtful people have been drawn to a contemplation of the negro problem, particularly that phase of it which relates to the industrial outlook for the race, and the degree of success that has attended the efforts of its individual members to make a place for themselves in the great fundamental activities of life by the pursuit of which only, all races have succeeded in elevating themselves.

So important is this subject that a general conviction is growing everywhere in the nation, that a careful study of the conditions and needs of the negro population, a study absolutely removed from race prejudice and partisan bias, is necessary to the highest interests of both negroes and whites.

The twelfth census of the United States shows that the negro race is not dying out as many predicted it would, but that it is indeed increasing as fast as the white native born, and will continue to do so in the future so far as any hindrance to its growth now in view is concerned.

The nearly nine millions which forms the present negro population of the country, added to by the natural increase of nearly one hundred and fifty thousand a year, the gain shown to have taken place between 1890 and 1900, is, apparently, destined to be a part of the nation for all time.

The conditions surrounding this great number of human beings comprising about twelve per cent. of our total population, who are backward in, or utterly ignorant of, the arts and sciences which are the groundwork and main support of our civilization, is a matter that should not be guessed at, but investigated with a view to ascertaining all the facts, and, guided by the knowledge thus acquired, public interests demand that their development should be assisted in every possible way.

There is certainly a noticeable absence of negroes in the trades

requiring skill, and as it is from the ranks of workmen engaged in such labor that most, if not all, the successful organizers of great industrial enterprises are drawn, it would seem from their failure to obtain a footing in these advanced branches of labor, that the negro race has reached the limit of its capacity in the coarse and comparatively ill-paid work requiring only bodily strength, at which it is now almost universally employed.

This exclusion from advanced and gainful occupations, whether due to incapacity inherent in the race or to prejudice on the part of white workmen, or in part to both causes, is, while it continues, an effectual barrier to the negro's moral and industrial development.

Excellence in labor, industry, skill, perseverance, intelligence, thrift, ambition, and self-denial, are the means by which in a country of free opportunities like ours, men are constantly passing from the lowest to the highest strata of labor, and from the most restricted to the widest spheres of activity in the social and industrial life of the nation.

To inspire an individaul or a race with the ambition that leads to high achievement, there must be an incentive in the form of prospective rewards and a clear course open in the path that leads upwards. If these are wanting, hope and ambition die and effort ceases to be directed to anything higher or more far-reaching than obtaining merely the things necessary to sustain life on the lowest animal plane.

The State has not neglected its duty to the negro race; since the emancipation it has provided liberally for their education, making no distinction in this respect between their children and those of the whites. Indeed, in many places special educational efforts directed toward meeting the peculiar requirements of negro children have been made. and although these extend backward over a full generation, it cannot as yet be said that the results reached satisfy the hopeful anticipations of their friends, or are commensurate with the efforts made on theif behalf.

It may be said that with equal educational facilities enjoyed for so many years the negroes should make a better showing in the superior lines of employment, and that their failure to do so is due to racial incapacity for anything higher than the commonest forms of labor; that if they possessed the necessary mental qualifications, ambition to advance and a capacity for something better than menial work, they would, through their own exertions, have succeeeded in

establishing themselves at least to some extent, in the superior grades of labor. But such reasoning would be superficial; it should be borne in mind that servile labor in its most extreme form—slavery, has been the lot of the negro race from the settlement of the continent up to forty years ago.

Unquestioning submission to the will of a master or an overseer was a primary law of the system, and it would be surprising indeed if the negro always accustomed to the guidance of others in all things had been able after more than two hundred and fifty years of an experience which involved a total effacement of independent thought on his part, to acquire in the little more than one generation which has elapsed since emancipation, the enterprise, power of initiative and mental vigor necessary for successful competition with the whites. A longer time should, in reason, be allowed for recovery from the timidity, which, from long subjection, has become an inbred characteristic of the race, and for the development of proper self-assertion and confidence before final judgment can be passed upon the capacity of the negro to take and hold a higher place than that now occupied by him in the industrial life of the nation.

But the question of practical importance which follows that of the negro's capacity to acquire a knowledge of the technique and practice of mechanical industry is, assuming that they can do so, will the managers of great industrial enterprises receive them into their shops and will the white mechanics who must always be greatly in the majority, consent to work with them; until that is settled in a manner favorable to the negro, industrial education will only fill his mind with delusive hopes which cannot be realized and make him discontented with the occupations he now follows, and in the pursuit of which he meets with little or no opposition on the part of the whites.

That this aversion to the negro and disinclination to colaborate with him exists among the whites there is no doubt, but there is also good reason to hope that as this dislike was based on the characteristics of the negro as he came fresh from chattel slavery, with but few human attributes beyond the form and speech of a man, it will weaken and finally disappear before a race transformed and humanized by the influence of education and the pursuit of industry.

The negro race forms a very important constituent group in the nation, and what they are able to make of themselves is a matter of profound importance to all. If they are to advance to the level of the general citizenship of the country it is necessary that they should

first of all earn a living; to do this they must have the ability and will to labor effectively, and should receive enough for that labor to live decently and rear their children.

The future of the negro depends on his being naturally capable of qualifying himself to meet these requirements. If he can do so, the future is assured to him; although it may take a long time to bring about the change, the practice of industry, thrift, self-restraint and the development of the moral qualities that grow from an advancing and hopeful life, will finally remove such prejudice as may now be entertained toward him. But if he cannot rise, and that by his own efforts, then, indeed, is he apparently destined to be in freedom as in slavery, a being to whom the paths leading to high achievement are forever closed.

The question is one of the highest importance not only to the negro race, but to the entire nation. If the blacks are incapable of advancement, and cannot take a place in the currents which flow through the industrial and social life of the nation, if so large an element of our population is destined to remain permanently in the lowest strata of labor without a hope that the lot of the son will ever be better than that of the father, we shall be confronted with a problem in social and political economy far more difficult of solution than any that has thus far confronted us since the beginning of our national life.

If the negro is capable of advancement it is in the highest degree a matter of interest to both races that no impediment be placed in his way. The workingmen should be especially concerned in seeing that he be given a free field and fair play; for the depth to which he may decend or be forced downward must ultimately become the same for the white laborer who competes with him.

The white population of New Jersey increased 27.8 per cent. from 1880 to 1890, and 29.8 per cent. from 1890 to 1900.

The increase shown by the negro population for the same periods was from 1880 to 1890 22.6 per cent., and from 1890 to 1900 46.6 per cent.

The negro population of the State by counties for 1880, 1890 and 1900, with the percentages of increase is shown in the following table:

COUNTIES.	1880.	1890.	1900.	Percentage of increase 1890-1900.
Atlantic,	894	2,267	6,920	674.0
Bergen,	1,891	1,814	2,600	42.8
Burlington,	2,570	2,624	3,130	21.8
Camden,	5,687	7,475	8,583	51.2
Cape May,	570	861	869	52.4
Cumberland,	1,965	2,100	2,403	22.3
Essex,	4,727	6,910	12,559	168.2
Gloucester,	1,144	1,417	2,058	79.9
Hudson,	1,655	2,456	4,439	173.2
Hunterdon,	552	497	518	*6.1
Mercer,	3,230	3,467	4,152	28.5
Middlesex,	1,625	1,643	1,900	16.8
Monmouth,	3,461	5,074	6,907	99.5
Morris,	810	956	1,618	100.
Ocean,	98	153	270	176.5
Passaic,	1,077	1,125	1,949	80.9
Salem,	2,769	2,810	3,029	9.8
Somerset,	1,659	1,348	1,559	*6.
Sussex,	174	134	160	*8.6
Union,	1,939	2,202	3,854	98.7
Warren,	356	305	367	3.1
New Jersey,	38,853	47,638	68,844	76.9

*Decrease.

In the decade between 1880 and 1890 the increase of our negro population was 5.2 per cent. less than that of the whites, while during the ten years following, or from 1890 to 1900, the negroes increased to the enormous extent of 46.6 per cent., against 29.8 per cent. on the part of the white population.

This great accession of colored people is, of course, not due to natural increase, but to immigration from the South, the exodus of negroes from that section to the western, northern and eastern States having been from a variety of causes, particularly great during the past ten years. The increase of negro population from 1890 to 1900 shows a higher percentage in New Jersey than elsewhere, except in the far western and northwestern States or territories, to which places a relatively greater number have gone, attracted by the opportunities offered for farming or for employment as agricultural laborers. The less energetic of the race were those who came to the northern and eastern States, tempted to do so, probably, by the prospects of in some way making an easy living in the cities. At least that would seem to be the case in New Jersey, the foregoing table showing that the abnormal increase of the negro population has been in the counties having the largest towns, while in the agricultural counties that do not show a decrease only a slight gain, very much below that of the whites has taken place.

The negro's preference for the cities is natural because of the advantage which life in them offers compared with the agricultural districts. Many come because there are better schools to which they can

send their children for a longer period of time in the year than they could do in the country; their churches, too, and other forms of social association are attractive, and for many there is the alluring prospect of being able to obtain some kind of employment that will be easier and more remunerative than the drudgery of plantation or farm life. But, on the whole, this predilection is productive of unfortunate consequences. Without the ability to perform any kind of labor for which there is a demand, the negro soon looses such ambition as he had and becomes a competitor with others of his race for such chance jobs as most of them depend upon to eke out a scanty and precarious livelihood.

The want of steady employment produces the usual and inevitable results which would be no different if the individuals under consideration were white men instead of black; forced downward by the necessities of hand to mouth living; idle the greater part of the time; inhabiting tenements that are generally in the last stages of delapidation and decay; shunned by the whites, whose home lives might furnish a civilizing stimulus to him, it is not surprising that the city negro in his ignorance of all things relating to the serious problems of life, soon begins to retrace his steps on the short road that for him leads back to barbarism. Perhaps the demoralizing influence of this deplorable environment is best shown by a reference to the number of whites and blacks comprising the population of the State Prison at Trenton. At the date of this writing the total number of inmates of that institution was eleven hundred and thirteen; of these eight hundred and nineteen were whites and three hundred and twenty were negroes. Of the negroes two hundred and seventy-three were residents of New Jersey, who were convicted of crimes committed within the State, and forty-seven were convicts sent to the prison by Federal judges from the District of Columbia, Delaware and other places outside of New Jersey.

Excluding these latter and confining the calculation to negroes committed under State law, the astonishing fact is shown that these form *exactly twenty-five* per cent. of the population of the State Prison, while the entire number of the race resident in the State when the census of 1900 was taken constituted only *three and six-tenths* per cent. of its total population. If this state of things is brought about by unjust discrimination against the negro, because he is a negro, if his efforts to advance himself are nullified by prejudice, and he is forced into criminal paths through sheer hopelessness and despair, the

injustice to him and the shame to our civilization is infinitely greater than that which grew out of the old institution of legalized slavery.

To help to an understanding of the capacity of negro boys for skilled or semi-skilled employment the schools of the State in which manual training forms part of the course of instruction were appealed to for information with results that are given in the pages that immediately follow.

THE NEGRO IN MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOLS.

To appreciate the character and range of mental and manual activity sought to be developed in children by the system of training now established in our schools, it is necessary to understand that its purposes are not merely to teach the handling of tools and the making of things of utility but to train hand, eye and brain to skillful co operation in the production of articles that will not only be useful but also pleasing to the sense of beauty; it seeks to develop such mechanical and artistic instincts as the child may possess; it instructs him how to make real things and to comprehend that in them which is useful and beautiful.

In these first lessons children of the white race have an immense advantage derived from a long ancestry familiar with the practice of art craft and handicraft. Race traditions and environment favor the development in them of a spirit of enterprise, self-reliance, confidence and commendable pride in the achievement of something, all of which makes the acquisition of knowledge a comparatively easy and pleasant task to children of average mental capacity.

With so much in their favor it seems only natural to suppose that the superiority of white over negro children who begin, it may be said, without any of these helpful influences, should be plainly apparent when they come together for instruction in the schools.

But the experience of teachers who have taught and are still teaching boys of both races is that such superiority is not definitely shown; that the aptitude for handling tools displayed by negroes is little, if any, below that of the average white youths pursuing the same lines of training, although the number of negro boys who take the manual training course is admitted to be too small to form the basis of a just comparison.

To ascertain the facts from those best qualified to speak on the subject, the following letter was addressed to the superintendents or principal teachers of all public schools in New Jersey having man-

ual training departments, with a blank, a copy of which follows the letter:

"Dear Sir: The Bureau of Statistics of New Jersey is desirous of making a study of the negro as an artisan with a view to showing the present standing of persons of that race in the mechanical and other industries requiring skill and training on the part of operatives.

"This study of the status of the negro as an artisan is for the purpose of determining whether he has at present a foothold as such and also to ascertain the attitude of employers and white mechanics engaged in the great industries toward his admission as a workman.

"As the inquiry will be directed in part toward learning something from authoritative sources regarding the negro's fundamental capacity for acquiring a practical working knowledge of mechanical arts on modern lines the opinions of instructors from whom many of them have received and are now receiving their first lessons in the use of tools would shed much light on this phase of the question and is earnestly solicited.

"The facts brought out by the inquiry we have in contemplation will very materially assist the work of manual training schools, and also do much, we hope, toward enlightening students of the negro race as to the prospects of being able to turn the knowledge they are striving to acquire to practical account in shaping their careers for the future.

"Accordingly, we take the liberty of requesting answers to the questions contained in the accompanying circular, which please return at your earliest convenience."

The questions on the circular were as follows:

1. Date of beginning manual training in the school.
2. Number of male pupils who have taken the course.
3. Number of these who were negroes.
4. Where selection is allowed what branches are mostly chosen by negroes.
5. Number of negro boys now being instructed.
6. How do negro students compare with white in the matter of aptitude in learning the use of tools.
7. Do you know of any negro boys trained in your school who are now employed at mechanical occupations.
8. Give your general observations on the character of negro boys and on their capacity for the acquisition of mechanical knowl-

edge. Whatever you may say will be regarded as confidential, if you so desire.

Twenty-nine of these circulars were sent out, that being the number of public schools in which manual training is a distinct part of the course of instruction. Eighteen answers were received, most of which contained the information requested in fairly comprehensive form.

The system of manual training has been establishem only during recent years, although a few schools had made a commencement as early as 1888. Instruction imparted now covers many of the wooden industries, such as turning, carving, cabinet making and carpentry, metal work; elimentary plumbing and blacksmithin are also taught.

But little information is given as to the number of pupils who had taken the full course since manual training was established in the various schools; only a few of the instructors appear to have any records bearing upon the subject, or are able to state how many of the students were negroes. Four schools report having passed an aggregate of one hundred and fifty-three negro boys through the entire course of training since the system was first begun. Seven schools report one hundred and forty-three as the number now under instruction, and one, devoted entirely to the industrial training of negro children of both sexes, reports four males and twenty females as having taken the entire course and graduated from the school. This same institution reports having now under instruction fifty-seven negro boys who are being trained mostly in carpentry and iron work, and sixty-four negro girls who are being instructed in domestic science.

In answer to the question, "How do negro boys compare with whites in the matter of aptitude in handling toools?" such answers as are given make a favorable showing for the negroes, although there are a few instances in which the opinions expressed are not so complimentary to them. The following are the replies which are given just as received:

"Have but one negro boy now under instruction; he is very bright and keen."

"From my observation, negro boys compare favorably with white boys."

"In the matter of capacity for learning, there is little, if any, difference between the races."

"The average seems to be a little below the whites."

"The average fully up to the whites."

"Negro boys are slow in learning, but are very patient and finally are as successful as whites."

"Rather better than whites."

"Under the same conditions the aptitude of boys of both races is about the same."

In answer to the question, "Do you know of any negro boys trained in your school who are now employed at mechanical occupations?" the answers from all the schools with the exception of the one above referred to as being devoted exclusively to the industrial education of negroes is that they know of none. That institution is able to locate four of its graduates and reports them as being employed as follows: "One is in business in Philadelphia, one is taking an advanced course in carpentry at Pratt Institute, one is in a South Jersey institution taking an advanced course, and one is now employed as a teacher."

The opinions expressed by the instructors in the schools regarding the character of negro boys and their capacity for acquiring a knowledge of things mechanical are for the most part creditable to the race from both points of view. The instructors answer as follows: The first is from the manual training and industrial school for negro children exclusively:

"In my experience as teacher I have found that negro boys compare facorably with white boys in the acquisition of knowledge in general. Previous training, or rather lack of training, and environment have been against the negro's acquisition of mechanical knowledge. When these conditions are improved the negro boy will show the average aptitude in the matter in question."

I have spent some time at Hampton, Virginia, and have come to believe that as large a proportion of negro boys are mechanically inclined as of white boys; but probably there are fewer of exceptional ability. I am thoroughly convinced that hard training is of the greatest advantage to them, and liberal public expenditures is certainly justified for this purpose. I wish I might furnish you actual data. I shall be interested in learning the conclusion reached."

"I find that they like the work in the shops and seem to take it up as well as the whites. The commercial side of the sewing, cooking, etc., which is taught seems to appeal to them. The girls make good cooks; the boys are fairly accurate."

"Negro boys who take manual training as part of the grammar

school course, require a somewhat longer time to acquire skill, but seem greatly interested after they do acquire it." They do a good class of work. One negro boy of the sixth grade, 1903, has shown much interest in, and aptitude for original work, this is less usual with colored than with white boys."

"So far as I have observed, negro boys have done either remarkably good or remarkably poor mechanical work. There seems to be no medium workers among them. The bright boys have an especial aptitude for mechanical work, while there are a few who take no interest in it, and are hard to impress. Some of our best work in drawing, freehand and mechanical, is done by negro children. They appear to be very fond of the subject."

"I have always in the schools I have taught, been interested in the way negro boys take hold of tool work. At first they are more awkward and inefficient with tools than white boys, but their success in the production of good work gives them great pleasure and incites them to further effort. It has been my good fortune to have had some excellent workers from that class. In a school in which I taught that form of manual training not known as "sloyd", but which dealt with abstract or rather technical making of joints to gain efficiency with tools, a colored boy in one year's work attained better results than his white companions. The joints he made were as nearly perfect as could be desired. He returned to the South, and, of course, I cannot report results of continued effort. Negro children think slowly, but are patient, painstaking, and earnest."

"Since organization, we have had but two negro children, a boy and a girl, in our grammar and high school department. The boy graduated and is now in Cornell University, but did not take any manual training and did only fairly well in the experimental science laboratories. The girl has taken instruction in sewing and cooking and has done nice work. We have never exceeded one per cent. of negro children in our total enrollment."

"The negro, so far as my observation goes, lacks perseverance, is easily satisfied with his results, and is not easily held up to a high standard of work. My experience with them, however, has been so limited that it is hardly fair to make any general statement as to their capacity. There is one colored boy now in the eighth grade who is doing finely in the shops, but he is an unusually bright colored boy."

"Negro boys at twelve years of age are as far advanced physically as white boys at fourteen; mentally, they are equal at that age to

white boys of eight or nine. They acquire drawing, tool-skill, and basketry very fast. Given an industrial demand for their labor, the negroes will improve fast. Exceptions are striking in their orderliness, interest, and efficiency."

"Having had but one colored boy take the entire course, I am unable to make comparison between the pupils of both races. I may say, however, that the one pupil did very satisfactory work, and the one now taking the course is about the average of his grade."

"We have but one negro boy in the school; he is studying chemistry. The capacity of negroes for acquiring mechanical knowledge has not been tested here. They do not take to such a course. We have had but few negroes in the school, and all have been poor students. They do not like to apply themselves to study."

The foregoing opinions reflect the impressions of those under whose care and direction a large number of negro children have made their first attempt at learning to handle tools used in the skilled trades. The range of trades in which instruction is given in the schools is not very extensive, nor does the training go much beyond the mere rudiments in such handicrafts as are taught. There is not, therefore, the selection which would enable a boy to choose the work for which he might have the greatest liking and at which consequently he could accomplish the best results. He must take that which is offered or nothing.

Among the vastly greater number of white boys who take the manual training course, there is sure to be a number who have special natural aptitude for the craft or crafts which are the subject of instruction, and, as a consequence, their work is apt to excell that of boys who had not the same liking for it, but who could perhaps do equally well or better in some other line.

As stated above the proportion of negro boys in the total enrollment, is not above one per cent. The same proportion would probably hold good among the pupils who take the manual training course. If so, there would be in a class of one hundred boys, ninety-nine whites and one negro. Whatever the craft taught, there would surely be among the ninety-nine, many better fitted to follow it than any other trade, and who, if allowed a selection, would have chosen it in preference to all others; while the solitary negro boy might be much better adapted by natural capacity and inclination to do his best work at something else. It would be manifestly unfair under these circumstances to expect that his work should be superior to, or even

equal that which might be produced by some one among his numerous competitors.

The commendatory terms in which the teachers refer to the natural capacity of such negro boys as have come under their observation are, therefore, very encouraging. That their conclusions are reached by actual experience and without bias for or against the negro race is absolutely certain. On the whole, it may be said that so far as the small number attending New Jersey schools may be regarded as a fair basis for comparison, negro boys are not conspicuously inferior to whites in either a desire for instruction or the capacity to profit by it.

THE NEGRO ARTISAN BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR.

That the ngro has the capacity to become an artisan is not a new proposition, but a fact well known all over the South where many hundreds of the race are now employed at skilled industries.

It would be safe to say that before the Civil War most of the mechanical work in the South was done by negroes either slave or free. The report of the Seventh Annual Conference of the Atlanta University says on the subject, quoting Bruce's Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century:

"The county records of the seventeenth century reveal the presence of many negro mechanics in the colony during that period, this being especially the case with carpenters and coopers. This was what might be expected. The slave was inferior in skill but the ordinary mechanical needs of the plantation did not require the highest aptitude. The fact that the African was a servant for life was an advantage covering many deficiencies."

Nevertheless, the report goes on to say that several large planters went to the expense of bringing from England handicraftsmen who were skilled in the very trades in which negroes belonging to these planters had been specially trained. This would seem to show that the planters held a low estimate of their slaves' knowledge of the higher branches of mechanical work.

Cooley's "Slavery in New Jersey" is authority for the statement that in this State, negroes were employed as miners, iron workers, saw mill hands, house and ship carpenters, wheelwrights, coopers, tanners, shoemakers, millers, and bakers, and at other employments requiring skill and judgment before the Revolutionary War, and

other colonial records show that in Pennsylvania as early as 1708, there were enough slave mechanics to make their competition sevely felt by the freemen.

Ingle's "Negro in the District of Columbia" states that during the early part of the nineteenth century the number of negro artisans increased. "In the District were many superior mechanics; Benjamin Banneker the negro astronomer, assisting in surveying the District in 1791."

Olmsted, in his journeys through the slave states just before the outbreak of the Civil War, found slave artisans in all the states through which he journeyed. They worked in tobacco factories, ran the engines on steamboats, made barrels, etc. On a South Carolina plantation he was told by the master that "the negro mechanics exercised as much skill as the ordinary mechanics that he was used to employ in New England." In Alabama, Mr. Olmstead mentions having seen a negro carpenter who, he says, was a careful and accurate calculator and an excellent workman; this man was bought for Two Thousand Dollars. In Louisiana, he was told that master mechanics often bought up slave mechanics and with their labor carried on the business of contractors. An iron works on the Cumberland River was run for a time by salve labor contributed by the stockholders.

Further and very interesting light on the negro's standing as an artisan before the Civil War is furnished by an ex-Governor of a southern state in an article in the North American Review (156-472). It is quoted at considerable length in the report of the annual conference of the Atlantic University, and is in part as follows: "Prior to the war, there were a large number of negro mechanics in the southern states; many of them were expert blacksmiths, wheelwrights, wagon makers, brick masons, carpenters, plasterers, painters, and shoemakers. They became masters of their respective trades by reason of sufficiently long service under the control and direction of expert white mechanics. During the existence of slavery the contract for qualifying the negro as a mechanic was made between his owner and the master mechanic."

Such slaves were especially valuable and constituted a privileged class with a large degree of freedom. They were often hired out by their masters and sometimes hired their own time, although this latter practice was frowned upon as giving slaves too much freedom and nearly all states forbade it by law; although some, like Georgia, permitted the custom in certain cities.

In all cases the slave mechanic was encouraged to do good work by extra wages which went into his own pocket. For instance, in the semi skilled work of the tobacco factories, the Virginia master received from One Hundred and Fifty to Two Hundred Dollars annually for his slave and the employer fed him; but the slave by extra work, could earn for himself Five Dollars or more per month. So carpenters sometimes received as much as Two Dollars a day for their masters and then were given a chance to earn more for themselves.

In Texas nine slaves, some of them carpenters, were leased at an average of a little over Two Hundred and Eighty Dollars a year and probably earned something over this. If the mechanic was a good workman and honest the master was tempted to allow him to do as he pleased so long as he received from him a certain yearly income. In this way there arose in nearly all southern cities a class of negro clients free in everything but name; they owned property, reared families, and often lived in comfort. In earlier times such mechanics bought themselves and families and became free, but as the laws began to bear hard on free negroes, they preferred to remain under the patronage and nominal ownership of their masters. In other cases they migrated to the north and there worked out their freedom, sending back stipulated sums. Many, if not most of the noted leaders of the negro in earlier times belonged to this class, such as Vasey, Nat Turner, Richard Allen, and Absolom Jones. They were exposed to neither the corrupting privileges of house servants nor to the blighting tyranny of field work and had large opportunities for self-development.

Usually the laws did not hinder slaves from learning trades. On the other hand, the laws against educating slaves really hindered the mechanics from attaining any very great degree of efficiency; save in rare cases they had to work by rule of thumb usually.

North Carolina allowed slaves to learn mathematical calculations but not reading and writing; Georgia decreed in 1833 that no one should permit a negro to transact business for him in reading or writing. Gradually such laws became more severe—Mississippi, in 1830, debarred slaves from printing offices; and Georgia, in 1845, declared that slaves and free negroes could not take contracts for building and repairing houses, as mechanics or masons. Restrictions, however, were not always enforced and the slave mechanic

flourished. One obstacle, however, he did encounter from first to last and that was the opposition of white mechanics.

In 1708 the white mechanics of Pennsylvania protested against the hiring out of negro mechanics, and were successful in getting acts passed to restrict the further importation of slaves. Later, they protested again, and the Legislative Assembly declared that the hiring of black mechanics was "dangerous and injurious to the Republic and not to be sanctioned."

Especially in border states was opposition fierce. In Maryland, the Legislature was urged in 1837 to forbid free negroes entirely from being artisans; in 1844 a bill was reported to keep negro labor out of tobacco warehouses; in 1844 petitions came to the Legislature urging the prohibition of free black carpenters and taxing free black mechanics; and finally in 1860 white mechanics urged a law barring free blacks "from pursuing any mechanical branch of trade."
any mechanical branch of trade."

Mississippi mechanics told Olmsted that they resented the competition of slaves and that one refused the free service of three negroes for six years as apprentices to his trade. In Wilmington, North Carolina a number of persons destroyed the framework of a new building erected by negro carpenters or mechanics. A public meetnig was called to denounce the act and offer a reward. The deed was charged upon an organized association of one hundred and fifty workmen. There were similar disturbances in Virginia, and in South Carolina white mechanics about this time, were severely condemned by newspapers as "enemies to our peculiar institutions and formidable barriers to the success of our native mechanics."

In Ohio about 1820 to 1830 and thereafter the white mechanics' societies combined against negroes. One master mechanic, President of the Mechanical Association of Cincinnati was publicly tried by the association for assisting a young negro to learn a trade. Such was the feeling that no colored boy could find entrance as an apprentice, and few workmen were allowed to pursue their calling. Negro mechanics who had purchased their freedom in the slave states moved to the North; in many instances these were met by a prejudice so strong as to prevent their obtaining work. If one of them was employed as a mechanic, the white men struck and compelled his discharge. Many capable and earnest negro artisans could do no better under this hostility than work as common laborers until they could, by saving up, take small contracts and employ black labor to help them.

Enthusiastic testimony to the skill of the negro mechanics of ante-blum days is borne by an artisan who learned his trade from one of them; writing to the Atlanta University on that subject, he says:

"The slave owners early saw the aptitude of the negro to learn handicraft, and fully appreciating what vast importance and value this would be to them (the masters) selected their brightest young salvemen and had them taught in the various trades. Hence on every large plantation, you could find the negro carpenter, blacksmith, and brick and stone mason. These trades comprehended much more in their scope than they do now. Carpentry was in its glory then. What is done now by varied and complicated machinery was wrought then by hand. The invention of the planing machine is an event within the knowledge of many persons living to-day.

"Most of our wood working machinery has come into use long since the days of slavery. The same work now done by machinery was then done by hand. The carpenter's chest of tools in slavery times was a very elaborate and expensive outfit. His kit not only included all the tools that the average carpenter carries now, but also the tools for performing the work now done by the various kinds of wood working machines. There is little opportunity for the carpenter of to-day to acquire or display genius and skill at his trade as could the artisans of old.

"One only needs to go down South and examine hundreds of old Southern mansions and splendid old church edifices, still intact, to be convinced of the fact of the cleverness of the negro artisan, who constructed nine-tenths of them, and many of them still provoke the admiration of all who see them, and are not to be despised by men of the present day.

"There are few, if any, of the carpenters of to-day, if they had the hand tools, could get out the "stuff" and make one of these old style massive panel doors—who could work out by hand the mouldings, the stiles, the mullions, etc., and build one of those windows which are found to-day in many of the churches and public buildings of the South; all of which testifies to the negroes skill as an artisan in the broadest sense of the term.

"For the carpenter in those days was also the cabinet maker, the wood turner, coffin maker, pattern maker, and generally the maker of most things made of wood.

"The negro blacksmith held almost absolute sway in his line, which included the many branches of forgery, and other trades now

classified under different heads from that of the regular blacksmith. The blacksmith in the days of slavery was expected to make any and everything wrought of iron. He was to all intents and purposes the machine blacksmith, horse shoer, carriage and wagon ironer and trimmer, gunsmith, and wheelwright; he often whittled out and ironed the haines, the ploughstocks, and the singletrees for the farmers, and did many other things too numerous to mention.

"They were experts in tempering edge tools by what is known as the water process, but many of them had processes of their own for tempering tools which they guarded with zealous care."

Before the Civil War there were many negro machinists in the South. The slave holders were generally the owners of the factories, machine shops, saw mills, and other establishments requiring skilled labor of that kind. They, also, owned all the railroads and the shops connected with them. In these places the slave mechanic and laborer had almost entirely supplanted the white workmen at the time the great conflict broke out. Many of the railroads had entire train crews except the conductors made up of slaves—including engineers and firemen. Had the war not resulted in emancipation, white mechanics and laborers in the South would have been completely ousted in time by the slaves whom the masters were having trained for their positions.

While the poor whites and masters were at the front fighting the negroes were at home doing the work necessary for their support in the field. They were in the gun factories making arms and in the various shops turning out wagons, harness, saddles, and bridles for the army; and in fact they were doing every variety of work required for the public service in war, as well as everything appertaining to the ordinary requirements of private life; absolutely every white man physically capable of bearing arms, being then in the ranks of the army.

The same authority quoted above concludes his recollections of the old time negro artisan as follows:

"Much has been said of the new negro of the new century, but with all his training he will have to take a long stride in mechanical skill before he reaches the point of practical efficiency where the old negro of the old century left off.

"It was the good fortune of the writer once to fall into the hands of an old uncle who was master of what would now be half a dozen distinct trades. He was generally known as a mill wright or mill

builder. A mill wright now is only a man who sets up machinery, shafting and belting. In the days of slavery, the mill wright had to know how to construct everything about the mill, from foundation to roof. This man could take his men with their 'cross cut saws' and broad axes and go into the forests, hew the timbers with which to build the dams across the rivers and streams of water, to erect the mill house frames, get out all the necessary timber and lumber at the saw mill. Then he would without a sign of a drawing on paper, lay out and cut every piece, every mortise and tenon, every brace, and rafter with their proper angles, etc., with perfect precision before they put the whole together. I have seen my uncle go into the forest, fell a great tree, hew out of it an immense stick or shaft from four to five feet in diameter, and from twenty to thirty feet long, having as many as sixteen to twenty squares on its surface, or as they termed it, 'sixteen or twenty square.' He would then take it to the mill seat and mortice it, make the arms and all the intricate parts for a great 'overshot' water wheel to drive the huge mill machinery. This is a feat most difficult even for modern mechanics who have a thorough knowledge of mathematics and the laws of mechanics.

"It is difficult for us to understand how these men with little or no knowledge of mathematics or mechanics could take a crude stick of timber, shape it, and then go to work and cut out a huge screw and the 'tap blocks' necessary for these old style cotton presses."

Enough is shown to prove that negroes could master the mechanical arts of the old days, and that a large proportion of the work of that kind required in the South had been done by them before emancipation had destroyed the labor system of that section of the country and prepared the way for the industrial South.

With the dawn of the new era came improvements in the manner of doing work which had been for years in vogue in the North and with them came the white workmen. Negro artisans were but poorly equipped to met such competition. He knew how to work only by rule of thumb for he had never been trained otherwise, but was accustomed to having the guidance and protection of an intelligent and influential white master. The new industrial development was slow of growth and for some years after the close of the war the negro artisan still held his own; but the time finally came when crushed by the many disadvantages under which he labored, the black workman was forced to accept low wages and submit to practical self-effacement, so far as social protection was concerned. But even this

was not sufficient to enable him to hold his place; the progress of the industrial movement demaned a higher order of skill than he possessed, and in the nature of things he had no means of acquiring it. His white fellow workman only could teach him, and that he would not do because of strong race prejudice and resentment against the negro for working for lower wages. Apprenticeship to the older negro mechanics did little or no good, for they were themselves but little less ignorant of that which was wanting; they could not teach what they had never learned. In fact, it was only through the policy of accepting low wages that the negro succeeded in securing any share of work under the new order of things. By that means he was enabled to occupy places that otherwise would have been filled by white labor; but for the time being at least, this course increased the enmity toward him of his white fellow workers. The especial weakness of the ex-slaves was that his training as an artisan extended only to doing work and not to seeking or marketing it when done. His trade had been learned because his master willed it and he worked wherever ordered to do so, not troubling himself at all about wages which was entirely the concern of the master, so that even if he had possessed equal skill, the white mechanic's prestige of race, free from the taint of servility, coupled with his general intelligence and his knowledge of the demand and the market for his labor, constituted an advantage which foredoomed the negro's competition to failure.

The position of the negro in the South was made still worse by a bad class of politicians, black and white; these succeeded in persuading him that the path to real freedom lay through the acquisition of political power. The prejudice thus stirred up all over the South against the reconstruction negro voter, inevitably resulted in intensifying general hostility to him on social and industrial lines.

In time this feeling was greatly weakened if not entirely removed, and negro workmen in the South are now making their way with comparatively little opposition, into such occupations as they may be fitted for. But as yet the number that have got into the trades or other forms of mechanical industry is very small indeed. The great bulk of the negro population of the South is still to be found on the plantations or employed in some form of personal or domestic service.

With the testimony of the manual training instructors in favor of negro boys having the capacity to learn the elementary principals

at least of such crafts as are taught in the schools, supplemented as it is, by the creditable record of the negro artisan in the South for many generations before the Civil War, no reasonable ground remains for doubting the fitness of the race for successfully following many of the industries requiring some degree of skill.

Under these circumstances a fair proportion of negroes should be found in the factories and workshops, if not in the higher grades of labor, at least working at something above the very lowest. Failure to find such employment can be charged only to lack of enterprise, self asertion, or perseverance on their part; or else to the existence of prejudice against them on the part of employers or the unions of white workmen too strong to be overcome.

To ascertain what foothold the negroes have at present in factory and other forms of skilled employment, a blank containing the following questions was sent to a selected number of representative establishments engaged in each of the chief industries carried on in the State:

1. Total number of employees.
2. Total number of negroes employed, if any.
3. How many of the negroes are skilled or semi-skilled workmen.
4. What kind of skilled work is done by negroes.
5. What wages do negro workmen receive per week.
6. Are negroes paid the same wages as white men for the same kind of work?
7. How do negroes compare in efficiency with white men on the same kind of work?
8. Do negroes improve in efficiency?
9. Have the negro workmen received any education or are they totally illiterate?
10. Shall you continue to employ negro workmen?

These circulars were mailed to the proprietors or managers of four hundred and seventy-five manufacturing establishments representing eighty distinct industries. The plan followed was to make a thorough canvass of such occupations as from the reports received were shown to have negroes among their employees. In such cases blanks were sent to every other establishment engaged in the same industry with a view to learning if negro labor was general among them. If on the other hand, the experimental blanks sent to a given industry came back without showing that some negroes were employed, it was assumed that further inquiry in that direction would

be useless; in a word the lines that were shown by the inquiry to lead to where black men were employed were followed up to the end, and all others abandoned.

As stated above the inquiry blank was sent to four hundred and seventy-five establishments including all the largest ones in each of the principal industries. Three hundred and ninety-eight were returned with all the questions satisfactorily answered. The aggregate number of persons employed in these establishments was 128,412, a number considerably in excess of fifty per cent. of the total employed in all kinds of manufacturing in New Jersey. It was found that only eighty-three establishments out of the total number reporting employed negro labor in any capacity. Two hundred and ninety-two reported no negroes at work in any branch of their business.

The aggregate number of persons of both races employed in the eighty-three establishments reporting negro labor is 38,364. There were nine hundred and sixty-three negroes among these, of whom only two hundred and thirty-four were either skilled or semi-skilled workers. The remaining seven hundred and twenty-nine were common laborers, stablemen, or team drivers.

The total number of employees and the proportion of negro workmen with the weekly wage rates of the latter, are given in the following table:

Number, Relative Proportion and Weekly Wages of Negro Workmen Employed in Eighty-three Manufacturing Establishments.

Office Number.	Industry.	Total Number of Persons Employed.	Negro Workmen.				Percentage of		Wages Paid per Week to Negroes.	Are equal wages paid to Negroes for the same work? Yes—No.
			Number who are Skilled.	Kind of Skilled Work Done.	Number whose work does not require skill.	Total number of Negroes.	Whites.	Negroes.		
1	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	230	69	Brick machine operators and firemen,	69	138	40.	60.	$8—$10.50	Yes
2	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	185	2	Engineers,	18	20	89.2	10.8	10.00	Yes
3	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	55	6	Brick burners and captains of sailing craft,	39	45	18.2	81.8	9.25	Yes
4	Manufacture of brick and terra cota,	50	.....	.....	10	10	80.	20.	9— 10.50	Yes
5	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	60	.....	.....	30	30	50.	50.	9— 9.90	Yes
6	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	30	3	Setting brick in kilns,	20	23	23.4	76.6	8— 10.00	Yes
7	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	65	2	Sand molds and set brick,	2	4	93.9	6.1	10.50— 12.60	Yes
8	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	125	.....	.....	1	1	99.2	.8	7.50	Yes
9	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	65	10	Not reported,	.....	10	84.6	15.4	8.10— 12.00	Yes
10	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	250	.....	Locomotive engineers,	1	1	99.6	.4	18.00	Yes
11	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	115	.....	.....	4	4	96.5	3.5	8.10	Yes
12	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	138	.....	.....	5	5	96.4	3.6	7.50	Yes
13	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	30	7	Clay machine operators,	.....	7	76.7	23.3	9.00— 14.00	Yes
14	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	50	.....	.....	3	3	94.	6.	10.50	Yes
15	Manufacture of brick and terra cotta,	65	.....	.....	6	6	90.8	9.2	10.50	No
16	Fruit and vegetable canning,	175	.....	.....	40	40	77.2	22.8	7.50— 9.00	Yes
17	Carriage and wagon building,	36	.....	.....	2	2	94.5	5.5	8.00	Yes
18	Chemical manufacture,	26	3	Firemen and running extractors,	.....	3	88.5	11.5	9.00— 11.00	Yes
19	Chemical manufacture,	268	.....	.....	3	3	98.9	1.1	10.00	Yes
20	Chemical manufacture,	750	.....	.....	2	2	99.7	.3	9.00	Yes
21	Chemical manufacture,	903	1	.....	19	20	97.8	2.2	9.00— 10.00	Yes
22	Cotton dyeing,	733	1	Runs washing machine,	.....	1	99.9	.1	6.00	Yes

Number, Relative Proportion and Weekly Wages of Negro Workmen Employed in Eighty-three Manufacturing Establisnments.

Office Number.	Industry.	Total Number of Persons Employed.	Negro Workmen.				Percentage of		Wages Paid per Week to Negroes.	Are equal wages paid to Negroes for the same work? Yes—No.
			Number who are Skilled.	Kind of Skilled Work Done.	Number whose work does not require skill.	Total number of Negroes.	Whites.	Negroes.		
23	Electrical appliances,	1,000	1	Running a drill press,	29	30	97.	3.	9.00— 15.00	Yes
24	Fertilizers,	147	11	Operate weighing and bagging machines,	16	27	81.7	18.3	7.50— 10.00	Yes
25	Food products,	136			2	2	98.5	1.5	.8.00	Yes
26	Food products,	115			3	3	97.4	2.6	12.00— 16.00	Yes
27	Food products,	125	1	Solders caps on cans,	1	2	98.4	1.6	7.50— 9.00	Yes
28	Food products,	390	1	Cutting up meat,	8	9	97.7	2.3	9.00— 12.00	Yes
29	Foundry (iron),	200			2	2	99.	1.	9.00— 10.00	Yes
30	Foundry (iron),	250			2	2	99.2	.8	7.50	Yes
31	Foundry (iron),	600	3	Not reported,	2	5	99.2	.8	8.10— 10.00	Yes
32	Furnaces, ranges and heaters,	165			2	2	98.8	1.2	9.90— 10.50	Yes
33	Glass,	193			60	60	68.9	31.1	7.00— 8.00	Yes
34	Glass,	510			20	20	96.1	3.9	7.00— 12.00	Yes
35	High explosives,	230			8	8	96.5	3.5	10.50— 12.00	Yes
36	Knit goods,	400			1	1	99.8	.2	3.50	Yes
37	Lamps (patented),	700			1	1	99.9	.1	10.00	†.....
38	Leather,	518	1	Not reported,		1	99.8	.2	12.00	Yes
39	Leather,	220			1	1	99.5	.5	6.00	Yes
40	Leather,	120			1	1	99.2	.8	9.00	†.....
41	Leather,	450			2	2	99.6	.4	10.00	Yes
42	Lime and cement,	100	30	Cooperage, carpentering and painting,	25	55	45.	55.0	9.00— 18.00	Yes
43	Lime and cement,	652	5	Not reported,		5	99.2	.8	7.50	Yes
44	Lime and cement,	700	1	Kiln tender,		1	99.9	.1	15.00	Yes

45	Machinery,	237			1	1	99.6	.4		10.00	‡	
46	Machinery,	691	15	Draughting, core-making, chipping castings,	18	33	95.3	4.7	9.00—	18.00	Yes	
47	Machinery,	154			1	1	99.4	.6		7.50	Yes	
47½	Machinery,	210			8	8	96.2	3.8	9.00—	10.50	Yes	
48	Machinery,	110			1	1	99.1	.9		12.00	Yes	
49	Machinery,	5,985	19	Moulders in iron foundry,	22	41	99.4	.6		*14.83	Yes	
50	Machinery,	133	2	Lathe hands,	3	5	96.2	3.8	*16.50—	19.80	Yes	
51	Metal goods (steel pens),	450			2	2	99.6	.4		9.00	Yes	
52	Metal goods (rivets and bolts),	600			2	2	99.7	.3	§		§	
53	Oil refining,	2,159	1	Cook,	1	3	99.9	.1	6.00—	12.00		
54	Oil refining,	800	8	Firemen, bumpers and stillmen,	30	38	95.1	4.9	12.00—	18.00	Yes	
55	Oil cloth and linoleum,	386			13	13	96.6	3.4	8.00—	9.50	Yes	
56	Oil cloth and linoleum,	475	2	Not reported,		2	99.6	.4	8.00—	11.00	Yes	
57	Paints,	265			6	6	97.7	2.3		10.00	Yes	
58	Paper making,	125			2	2	98.5	1.5		7.50	Yes	
59	Stone quarry,	200		Quarry stone,	20	20	90.	10.		9.00	Yes	
60	Rubber goods,	550			1	1	99.8	.2		10.00	Yes	
61	Sashes, blinds and doors,	125		One cuts lumber,	18	18	85.6	14.4		9.00	Yes	
62	Sashes, blinds and doors,	105			4	4	96.2	3.8		9.00	Yes	
63	Wooden box making and house trimmings,	83	2	Runs saws and plaining machine, and grades lumber,	6	8	90.4	9.6	9.00—	10.00	Yes	
64	Shipbuilding (steel and iron),	3,536			58	58	98.4	1.6		8.10	Yes	
65	Shipbuilding (steel and iron),	850	1	Blacksmith,		1	99.9	.1		18.00	Yes	
66	Shipbuilding,	140			1	1	99.3	.7		12.00	Yes	
67	Silk dyeing,	230			2	2	99.1	.9	9.00—	10.00	No	
68	Smelting and refining ores,	900	1	Smelting and refining,	3	4	99.6	.4	9.50—	15.75	Yes	
69	Smelting and refining ores,	650	2	Firemen,		2	99.7	.3	12.00—	15.00	Yes	
70	Steel and iron (bar),	100			3	3	97.	3.		7.50	Yes	
71	Steel and iron (forgnig),	680			1	1	99.9	.1		9.00	Yes	
72	Steel and iron (forging),	250			1	1	99.6	.4		7.50	Yes	
73	Steel and iron (forging),	475			1	1	99.8	.2		9.00	Yes	
74	Steel and iron (forging),	575	7	Moulders and furnacemen,	7	14	97.6	2.4	8.40—	15.00	Yes	
75	Steel and iron (structural),	1,150			3	3	99.8	.2		8.40	Yes	
76	Steel and iron (structural),	127	2	Machine tenders,	3	5	96.	4.	§		Yes	
77	Varnish,	86			1	1	98.8	1.2	§		§	
78	Watch case manufacture,	598			9	9	98.5	1.5		7.00	Yes	
79	Stone cutting and dressing,	100			5	5	95.	5.		11.00	Yes	
80	Contract building,	1,000	12	Masons' helpers,	8	20	98.	2.	10.00—	15.40	Yes	
81	Oakum manufacture,	100			2	2	98.	2.		9.00	Yes	
82	Car building,	550	2	Machine tender and lumber foreman,	2	4	99.3	7	9.00—	10.50	Yes	
	Totals,	38,364	234		729	963	97.5	2.5				

*Skilled laborers, wages not given.
†Are paid higher wages.
‡Not answered.
§Not reported.

A scrutiny of the list of skilled occupations given in the foregoing table shows that most of the negroes are engaged as machine tenders or at other duties, that, while much above hard manual labor, are still classifiable as skilled, only under a very liberal interpretation of the meaning of that term, and because their employers have themselves reported them in that way; only in a comparatively few instances are the wages paid on a par with those of the average skilled white workman.

The industry in which negro workmen appear to have the best foothold is the making of brick and terra cotta. In the fifteen establishments reporting, the total number of persons employed is 1,513; of these 307 or 20.3 per cent. are negroes; in four of them the percentage of negro employees is 81.8; 76.6; 60.0; and 50.0 respectively. Several others show proportions of their working force who are of the colored race, ranging from ten to twenty-three per cent.

One establishment manufacturing lime and cement employs fifty-five negroes out of a total of one hundred employees. Thirty of these men are working as coopers, carpenters or painters, the remaining twenty-five are laborers.

The opinions expressed by owners and managers of industrial establishments on the subject of negro labor which follow, are interesting and important; reflecting as they do the impressions of broad minded men of affairs, based on experience in organizing and managing large forces of labor. Almost without exception it will be found that the spirit running through these communications is tolerent and kindly, showing no trace of prejudice and advancing only such objections to the negro workman as are entirely in his power to overcome.

One firm of cornice and skylight manufacturers who formerly employed negroes says of them as workmen:

"We do not care for them, because they are not reliable; at least that has been our experience. We had quite a number in our employ at one time; they can be trained to do good work, but they cannot be depended upon. At least, that is the conclusion we have come to after having had many of them in our employ for several years."

A firm of food canners writes of negro labor as follows: "We do not employ negroes in our factory but have some of them on a farm where they are paid the same wages as whites, viz: $1.50 per day. We prefer white help because they are more intelligent as a rule; our experience with negroes is that they stay away from and

neglect their work for very trivial reasons. They are not ambitious and do not try to better their condition. We have succeeded in keeping some good negro help by weeding out the trash. During the packing season in the Fall we employ about fifty men, ten of whom are negroes. They do the rough work, such as scalding tomatoes, etc., and are as good at it as white men, but not so reliable. They are apt to remain away without notice. We employ a few negro women to peel tomatoes; their work is very satisfactory as they are very painstaking, but they are slow; earning about $1.00 per day to the $1.50 and $2.00 earned by white women, who, however, do poorer work in consequence of their greater speed. Our experience hardly affords material for a fair comparison, as we draw our colored help from a class that used to be connected with the business of horse racing up to the time Monmouth Park was closed. These people had to find other employment after racing was discontinued."

A leather manufacturer writes: "We employ no negroes simply because we have never received an application for employment from one of that race."

A manufacturer of leather goods says: "I do not employ negro labor hence can say nothing regarding their quality as workmen. If I had work at which a negro could be used, I most certainly would give it to him—no good reason why I should not."

A manufacturer of metal goods says: "We have never employed negroes for our work. Do not think there are any mechanics of that race in our line. We require skilled labor altogether."

A pottery company: "We have never employed negroes in our line. For some unknown reason they do not appear to have ever sought employment in pottery manufacture, at least not to our knowledge."

A manufacture of sash, doors, and blinds: "I do not employ any negroes at present. I have tried them as drivers and found them very good around horses, but in general very lazy. This laziness seems to increase with age."

A company engaged in the manufacture of paints and varnish writes: "We do not at present, nor have we at any time, employed negroes. We have no particular objection to negroes, and have no reason for their non-employment other than that they have never made application for work."

A manufacturer of metal goods writes: "We have no negroes

in our employ but do not object to them. If we should refuse to employ them it would be solely to avoid the risk of friction between them and white workmen. But we have never had an application for work from a negro, and cannot say now what we should do if one were to apply."

A manufacturer of tools and hardware: "We have no negroes in our employ, not from any prejudice on our part, but we do not think our men would make it agreeable for them. This we believe to be the reason why negroes do not enter the field of skilled mechanics."

A manufacturer of boilers says: "We never have, nor should we ever employ negroes such as are to be found in this quarter."

A brick manufacturer: "Have no negroes employed at our works and have made no attempt to use negro labor. We prefer white foreign help such as Hungarians, Polanders, etc."

Manufacturers of terra cotta: "Our work is done by skilled white mechanics; we have not and do not intend to introduce negro labor, believing that they never could be trained up to taking the places of white men in skilled labor."

Brick manufacturers: "We employ no negro workmen and have no intention of ever doing so."

Brick manufacturer: "We employ no negroes in our works. Do not regard them as being equal to white men in our business."

Art tile manufacturers: "We have never employed negro labor."

Manufacturer of food products: "There is no department of our works where negroes could be employed advantageously."

Manufacturers of hats: "We do not employ negroes in the hat manufacturing business; do not believe they could be trained to do the work."

Manufacturer of leather: "We employ no negroes, principally because none have ever applied to us for work. There are no negroes in the vicinity of our works."

Shoe manufacturers: "Very few, if any, negroes, are employed in this business; but there is no special reason that we know of for their exclusion."

Shoe manufacturers: "Have never tried them except to drive teams or do laboring work around the yard. Our white employees would object to working side by side with negroes."

Shoe manufacturers: "We have no negroes in our employe because there is a strong prejudice against them. Think, however, it would be better to employ them than to encourage them to steal by keeping them in idleness."

Watch case manufacturers: "We do not employ negroes in any capacity, except as porters and laborers."

Manufacturers of veneering: "Should be glad to employ some of them, but none have ever applied for work and none are living in our vicinity."

It will be noticed that only a comparatively few of the employers quoted above declare themselves opposed to negroes as workmen on grounds arising from experience with them in that capacity. Those who write against them in positive terms, do so for the most part on the assumption that, as a matter of course, white employees would revolt against working side by side with negroes.

"Laziness" and "unsteadiness at work" are the most serious shortcomings specifically urged against the race, in the opinions given by employers, who now have negro workmen or have had them in the past. Only a few intimate rather than plainly express a disbelief in the nregoe's ability to acquire such skill in mechanical occupations as to ever make him a desirable workman. But how far one or even a greater number of employers in a given industry may fall short of accurately expressing the sentiments of all is shown by the fact that while four manufacturers of brick and terra cotta declare that negro labor would not do in their business, and that none had been or ever would be employed in their several establishments the table of occupations in which negroes are employed shows that in fifteen establishments engaged in the same industry men of that race are now employed in large numbers, and, presumably, giving satisfaction.

On the other hand, a number of manufacturers engaged severally in the leather, leather goods, pottery, paint and varnish, and veneering industries, while reporting no negroes in their establishments, declare that the only reason for not having them is that none have ever applied for employment.

It would seem from the foregoing that the doors of workshops in which skilled labor is performed are not hopelessly closed against the negro; that, in fact, in many of them now men of the race who come properly equipped for work will be welcomed, and in others at least tolerated until time and their own efforts to attain the white man's standard in skill, morals and eductaion shall produce a change before which mere color will be forgotten as a cause of friction.

The attitude of labor organizations toward the negro as a workman was the next question to be considered.

If the unions were found to be hostile and opposed to his admission

to membership the negroe's efforts to secure a foothold in the skilled industries would meet an opposition very difficult to overcome, and one that would in all probability long delay the fulfillment of his hopes. If, on the contrary, the unions were not unfriendly, the negroe's progress would be made much easier; he could depend on being treated fairly in the shops by the men who had admitted him to equal rights as a member of their union, and his sense of self-respect would grow out of the consciousness of possessing and sustaining equal rights and responsibilities in the regulation of trade interests with his white fellow-craftsman.

With a view to ascertaining just what stand organized labor has taken on this question of supreme importance to the negro race a circular containing a few questions relating to the subject was addressed *to all* the international, national, State ,and central labor unions in the United States that were under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor. The addresses of the officers of these bodies were secured through the courtesy of Mr. Frank Morrison, general secretary of the Federation. The following are the answers received:

STATEMENT OF OFFICERS

of the National and International Trades Unions regarding their attitude toward the Negro in Industry..

United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

"Have a large number of negro carpenters affiliated with the United Brotherhood. Some are members of unions with white men, but the majority are in organizations composed only of negroes. These latter are altogether in the South.

"The regulations governing the admission of members makes no distinction between whites and negroes."

International Association of Metal Trades Mechanics.

"Members are under an obligation not to discriminate against any one on account of race, color or creed.

"Have some few negroes scattered through the various locals with white men. There is one organization of our craft in Savannah, Ga., composed entirely of negroes."

Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' International Union.

Makes no distinction between negro and white workmen. "A negro has the same privileges in the union as a white man. If found to be competent workmen they are admitted to any local of the organization."

Watch Case Engravers' International Association of America.

There are no local unions of Watch Case Engravers in New Jersey. "There is only one negro watch case engraver, and he is the only one that so far as I know has ever worked at the trade. Our regulations do not bar them, but negroes do not seek employment at our trade. The man referred to is the sole exception and there may never be another."

Interior Freight Handlers and Warehousemen.

The secretary of this union says: "I wish to state that we have over 400 negroes in our organization. We find them good workmen and as true to their obligations as the average white man.

"They are admitted to and take part in the business of meeting on terms of perfect equality with white members.

"Some of our locals are partly officered by negroes. This is the case particularly in East St. Louis, Ill."

National Alliance of Bill Posters and Billers of America.

"We have no locals composed entirely of negroes, but have a few individual members in our organization who are in locals with white men. Have never heard of any objection having been made to them. There is no color line in our union and negroes who are competent workmen are eligible to membership in any of our locals.

"The theory on which our regulations are based is that all men are equal and entitled to the same privileges, irrespective of race or color."

Tobacco Workers' International Union.

"We have many negro members, but they are mostly, if not altogether, employed in the South. Although our constitution makes no

difference between the races, where there are large numbers of both employed in a factory, we find it better that men of each should have a union of their own, and we usually organize them that way."

International Stereotypers and Electrotypers' Union.

"There are several negroes working at the business, and I think they are admitted to our unions when it is found they have served the required term of apprenticeship and are otherwise qualified for membership.

"We have no laws, regulations or rules which in any manner relate to or discriminate against the negro."

International Association of Glasshouse Employees.

"There are no locals of our trade in New Jersey, but in St. Louis, Mo., and Belleville and Steator, Ill., there are many negroes working at our trade, and they are admitted to the organizations of the craft on terms of perfect equality with white workmen. Our constitution contains a provision which prevents discrimination on account of color or nationality."

International Brick, Tile and Terra Cotta Workers' Alliance.

"There is no discrimination against negroes permitted by the constitution of the organization. So long as they are honest and upright and are able to do the work they are taken into the locals on the same terms as white men.

"There are a number of local unions composed almost entirely of negroes, and these seem to get along with as little friction as organizations made up entirely of white men."

"There was a time not very long ago when employers used colored men as strike breakers ,bringing them from remote distances to take the places of white men who were on strike for better conditions, but in almost every instance where such a move was made the negroes refused to take the places of strikers; therefore the feeling in our organization is very kindly toward them."

International Glove Workers' Union of America.

"The constitution of the organization and the obligation subscribed to by those who become members both forbid anything in the nature

of discrimination against any man on account of race, creed, or color.

"A local union of this organization in Johnstown, N. Y., has two negro members who are skilled block cutters. None others of the *colored* race are known to be employed at glove making at the present time."

Ceremic, Mosaic and Tyle Layers' Union.

Has negroes in the union. Two in New York. Does not seem to be any discrimination against them.

Bakers' and Confectioners' International Union.

"A considerable number of negroes are now working at the trade, most of them in the South. The negroes in that section of the country are fairly well organized. In Savannah, Ga., there is a local composed entirely of negroes, although there are many in the organizations with white men. Unions are strictly enjoined not to reject a negro if he apply for membership and is qualified."

Glass Bottle Blowers' Association.

"Have no law in the organization against the reception of negroes as members. The trade is one requiring a very high degree of skill and has also the disagreeable feature of being associated with hot furnaces. Negroes do not as a rule become highly skilled in any calling, and are not partial to hard work; hence, there are no negroes employed in our industry at any of the skilled branches."

National Association of Machine Printers and Color Mixers.

"Have no negroes working at the trade in New Jersey or elsewhere, so far as known by the secretary."

International Steel and Copper Plate Printers' Union.

"No negroes work at the trade of plate printing. There are no laws of the union which would prevent their membership providing they had served a regular apprenticeship."

Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees.

"Do not know of any negroes working at the business in New Jersey."

Window Glass Snapppers.

Secretary writes: "I am positive that there are no negroes working at our craft anywhere. They would not be admitted with white workmen on account of race antagonism, although rules and constitution of the order are against discrimination upon any grounds."

Railway Telegraphers.

"So far as known, there are no negroes working as railroad telegraphers. There are none of them in our union, and none would be admitted, as the rules make negroes ineligible."

Stove Mounters' International Union.

"Have no negroes working at the trade except some in Chatanooga, Tenn. Have no negro members of unions, although the law does not prohibit their admission."

Retail Clerks' International Protective Association.

"Have no negroes in the organization or working at the industry so far as is known."

United Hatters of North America.

Secretary writes: "Have never heard of negroes working at the hatting trade. The hatters' unions have never made any rules or regulations in reference to negroes. There has never been any necessity for it, as no negro has ever applied for admission. The only negro I have ever seen working in a hat factory was working as a laborer helping to color black hats."

International Association of Marble Workers.

"There are no negroes employed at any of the branches of the trade in Newark City who are members of the Union. Elsewhere there are large numbers of them, and they are admitted to all locals on the same terms as the whites.

"A majority of the negroes work in the finishing department, and there are many in the quarrying districts of Knoxville and in Georgia."

Piano and Organ Workers' International Union of America.

"No negroes employed in the manufacture of pianos or organs, but under the laws of our organization negroes, if otherwise qualified, are eligible."

The Saw Smiths' International Union.

"No negroes working at the trade anywhere, so far as known."

Amalgamated Rubber Workers' Union.

"No negroes employed in the rubber industry. There are no laws in the union excluding them from membership. The union makes no discrimination on account of race, nationality, color or creed."

National Brotherhood of Operative Potters.

"No negroes working in any of the departments of potteries where skill is required. Their employment as laborers is quite common."

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

"Do not allow negroes to become members of the brotherhood. A few of them are working in the Southern States as electricians, but they are not connected with any labor organization."

Trunk and Bag Workers' International Union.

"No negroes working at the trade; nothing in the constitution and by-laws, however, to prevent their becoming members."

Machine Textile Printers' Association of America.

"No negroes working at the trade. The question of admitting them has never been considered. It is a very rare thing to hear of a negro working in a print works."

Journeymen Tailors' Union of America.

"The constitution and laws of the union raise no barrier against the admission of men to membership on account of race, nationality, creed or color."

"There are some negro tailors in the South who work among people of that race, and a few in the North; some of these are members of the union and of the same locals as white tailors.

"There have been instances, however, where they have been refused admission to membership, but the cases are rare where they have ever applied."

Pattern Makers' League of North America.

"Know of no negroes who are pattern makers, but have heard that in the Southern States there are a few working at the trade."

Boot and Shoe Workers' Union.

"Makes no distinction between race, creed, color or sex. Every person, male or female, actively engaged in our craft who is over sixteen years of age is eligible to membership.

"There are not many negroes working at the shoe craft, yet there are some. There are comparatively few negro members, and no local unions composed entirely of shoe workers."

International Longshoremen, Marine and Transportation Association.

"Have many negro members throughout the country; some in mixed locals, and many in separate unions by themselves. On the Mexican Gulf coast there are many of these organizations, and the members are enjoying prosperous conditions. The union has no rules restricting the privileges of negroes."

International Shingle Weavers' Union.

"Have no rules or laws that discriminate against the negro.

"Do not know of any men of that race now employed at the trade.

"Shingle weavers have to work very hard to earn good wages, and negroes, as a rule, do not care to exert themselves beyond what is absolutely necessary to make some kind of a living.

"In some of the shingle mills of the South there are negroes working who are not organized."

Shirt Waist and Laundry Workers.

"Have no objections to negroes in the trade; they are in it now in considerable numbers, and the policy has been to organize them in separate locals."

The Granite Cutters National Union.

"Negroes are not debarred from membership, but very few of them learn the trade. In the South granite cutting is called a 'white man's trade.' Consequently the negroes do not look for employment at it, and if they did the employers would be backward about hiring them, simply because from custom and mutual understanding it is considered a white man's trade.

"In the North there are few who care to learn the trade, and, in fact, it requires either more activity or more skill than the negro is capable of or cares to apply to work of any kind; hence there are few of them following the trade at all, but so far as our laws are concerned, they are not debarred from membership."

Carriage and Wagon Workers' International Union.

"Negroes are not barred from membership. If any local union discriminates against them they do it without the sanction of the national body, and in opposition to the laws of the organization."

International Association of Machinists.

"No negoes are known to be working at the trade. At least none are members of the union. There are, probably, some negro machinists in the Southern States."

International Brotherhood of Leather Workers on Horse Goods.

"There are no negroes working at the trade in New Jersey, so far as is known. There are only five or six negroes working at this trade in the United States, and they are members of local unions with white men of the craft.

"Negroes are not excluded by the laws of the brotherhood."

Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America.

"The brotherhood has upward of three hundred negro members who are all in separate unions. They are, however, entitled under the law of the organization to the privilege of becoming members of any local union under its jurisdiction, as no man is debarred on account of race, color or creed.

"The secretary says further: 'I might state, however, that the prejudice against the negro is very strong, and while it is contrary to our constitution to refuse to admit men of that race, it would be very hard for a negro to gain admission to any local union of our brotherhood in any of the Eastern or Southern States, and even the granting of charters to them for separate local unions is strongly opposed by local unions in many sections of the country.

"There is reason to hope, however, that time and education will eradicate this feeling, and the trades unions of the country will see the necessity of organizing and educating the negro so as to prevent him from being used against them in struggles involving their rights and interests."

International Wood Carvers' Association.

"No negroes are known to be working at the trade. Nothing in the constitution, however, forbids their doing so, or prevents their being received in the local unions as members."

United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Steam and Gas Fitters and Helpers.

"There are a number of negroes employed at the plumbing trade in various parts of the country, but none have ever applied for admission to the unions.

"The constitution and by-laws of the union do not exclude negroes from membership. It is to be regretted that such negro workmen as are employed at the plumbing trade usually procure work in the very small shops where an almost exclusively jobbing trade is done, and are therefore not thrown in immediate contact with members of the union. The negro plumber appears to hold himself aloof from the union."

International Jewelry Workers' Union of America.

"Never heard of a negro being employed as a mechanic in any branch of the jewelry business. Nothing in the law of the union to prevent his becoming a member or working at the business if properly qualified."

United Textile Workers of America.

"Negroes are working in mills situated in the Southern States, but they are employed exclusively at work which requires no skill and is of a very dirty and disagreeable character; none of them are members of any trade body affiliated with the United Textile Workers of America."

American Wire Weavers' Protective Association.

"Negroes are not allowed to become members of the association, hence none of them are at work at the trade.

"The constitution provides that applicants for membership must be white males, twenty-one years of age."

Chain Makers' National Union of United States of America.

"No negroes known to be employed at the trade anywhere."

United Gold Beaters' National Union.

"No negroes employed in any capacity at gold beating anywhere in the country."

Print Cutters' Association of America.

"No negroes are employed at print block cutting. The business requires skill of a very high order, and there are not more than four hundred men in the country who are qualified to work at the trade.

"To become practical and efficient workmen a long apprenticeship must be served at the trade.

"There is nothing in the constitution or by-laws of the union forbidding negroes to join. The occasion for such a measure has never arisen."

Amalgamated Leather Workers' Union.

"No negroes are working at any branch of the trade requiring skill. Men of that race, however, are eligible to membership equally with whites the law of the order making no distinction between men on account of race or creed."

International Union of the United Brewery Workmen of America.

"Negroes are employed in the various departments of the brewery as drivers, stablemen and laborers of various kinds, but none having to do with the operations necessary for the production of beer. There is one brewery in Montgomery, Alabama, in which all the skilled workmen are negroes. These do not belong to the union.

"The negro laborers employed in most breweries are members of the unions, and have all the privileges enjoyed by white men."

American Federation of Musicians.

"Negroes are admitted to local unions with white men in the northern part of the country. In the South, where the feeling against the negro's pretensions to social equality is very strong, it has been found expedient to issue special charters to unions composed entirely of negro musicians."

International Union of Steam Engineers.

"There are a considerable number of negroes now working at the trade who hold membership in the same local unions as the white men. Where there are a sufficient number of negroes to form a union they are so organized separately. There is one such organization composed entirely of negroes.

"There are no special rules in the constitution applicable to negroes."

National Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers of America.

"There are no rules bearing on the admission of negroes to membership. Only one man of that race is known to be now working at the trade, and he is a member of a local composed, with the exception of himself, entirely of white men."

Journeymen Barbers' International Union of America.

"Negroes are admitted to membership in the local unions of the craft on equal terms with white men. At least this is the case in all parts of the country except the South, where negroes are most numerous, and where the color line is sharply drawn. There negro barbers are organized into separate locals. At a very low estimate there are now one thousand two hundred colored members of the International Barbers' Union.

"One of the general vice-presidents of the international body is a negro, and another was grand chaplain some few years ago. The conditions in the union between white men and negroes are perfectly equal."

International Brotherhood of Bookbinders.

"No distinction is made among workmen in the trade on account of color; the requirements for membership in the union are that the person should be a good workman and should have learned the trade in the regular way by serving an apprenticeship of four years.

The secretary of the International Brotherhood writes: "I have no knowledge of the color of men belonging to the union other than the local to which I am attached has two negro members who work at the trade and are considered good mechanics. These men receive the same wages and work an even number of hours with the white workman, and are in every respect treated as equals by the white men of the craft."

International Typographical Union.

"The union has never recognized the existence of a color line. Competent negro printers have always been and are now eligible to membership in our local unions.

"The laws of the organization entitle all active members to the same rights and privileges."

Cigarmakers' International Union.

"There are many negro members in the locals of the International Union and many locals having such mixed membership. As a rule, however, negro cigarmakers show a preference for local organizations composed entirely of men of their own color. This is particularly the case in the South."

Coopers' International Union of North America.

"Have no rules or laws recognizing the color line or any other form of discrimination on account of nationality or race. There are many negro coopers in the Southern States; their number is about equal to that of white men working at the trade. In many instances the negroes have unions of their own, but there are also a large number of locals composed of whites and negroes together."

Broom and Brush Makers' Union.

"Does not bar negroes from membership, and have many of them mixed in with whites in local organizations. There are also some local unions composed entirely of negroes. All mechanics are treated exactly alike, whether white or black."

Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' Alliance.

"Have no laws prohibiting the admission of negroes to membership, but know of no instance where they are in a local union of the trade along with white men.

"In the Southern States a limited number of the race are employed as metal workers in one or another form; in the cities of Charleston and Savannah there are two local unions composed entirely of negroes who work at the trade."

"As the industry is one which requires much skill it is questionable whether these negroes ever become proficient in all its branches, or possess sufficient skill to work up to the standard established in Northern workshops. In Southern cities the negroes employed in the trade do not command as high a wage as the white mechanic. While this may reasonably be attributed to their lack of skill, it may be in part, at least, because of their color."

The total number of circulars sent to the central unions was eighty-five; from these the answers immediately preceding, sixty-four in number, were obtained. A perusal of them will show that only two organizations, the Railway Telegraphers and Electrical Workers, have laws which forbid the admission of negroes as members. Nineteen others state that while their laws do not exclude negroes none of them are in the unions or working anywhere at these trades so far as known. Some few among them candidly admit that while under their laws negroes are eligible on the same terms as white workmen,

yet if one were to apply for admission the chances would be largely against his success. Forty-three, or two-thirds of the total number, who were heard from on the subject, declare unreservedly in favor of equal rights for negroes and whites both in the unions and the workshops.

All of these forty-three unions have negro members, some in local organizations with whites, but a large majority, particularly in the South, have locals of their own affiliated with the national trade body.

So far as the superior organizations of labor are concerned the foregoing communications show that liberality of sentiment toward the negro and recognition of his rights as a member of the human family, has taken the place of the bitter and unreasoning prejudice that, a little more than a generation ago, sought to close all skilled occupations to him by law.

Satisfactory as this is and full of bright promise for the future, it must be borne in mind that control over membership and power to decide who shall be admitted and who rejected, is, under the system of the American Federation of Labor, entirely in the hands of the local unions. As before noted, all the central organizations with only two exceptions have incorporated in either their laws or declarations of principles the proposition that from the standpoint of labor all men are equal, and that the color, creed or nationality of a workman should, and so far as they are concerned, shall be no bar to his admission if otherwise qualified for membership. This is, however, little more than a benevolent abstraction with only moral force at its back, and can easily be nullified by a local union disinclined to admit negroes.

LOCAL TRADE UNIONS AND THE NEGRO.

To test the sentiment of the local organizations toward the negro as a workman and co-laborer, and also with a view to showing whether or not his absence from the skilled industries is due to their opposition, a circular was sent to the secretaries of all local unions in New Jersey under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor. The circular contained the following questions:

1. May negroes join your union?
2. If not, how is their admission prevented?
3. If they may join, have you any negro members at present? . . . If so ,how many? . . .

4. Have any negro applicants been refused admission to your knowledge?

5. Does the law or the custom of the union forbid the admission of a negro if he is otherwise qualified?

6. If not admitted to membership, what are the chief objections to them?

7. Are these objections likely to be overcome in time?

8. Do you know of any negro workmen now being employed anywhere at your trade?

9. If so, please name the places?

10. Do such negroes receive the same wages as white men for the same kind of work?

11. General observations. Add here any facts or opinions you may wish to express regarding the negro. They will be held as strictly confidential if you so desire.

Three hundred of these circulars were sent out, of which number one hundred and ninety-six were returned, containing the information sought in a more or less complete form. The unions from which replies were received represent the following occupations:

Bottle blowers.
Boiler makers and iron ship builders.
Barbers.
Bakers and confectioners.
Boot and shoe workers.
Buffers and polishers.
Book-binding.
Brewery workmen.
Carpenters and joiners.
Cotton spinners.
Cigar makers.
Coopers.
Carriage and wagon makers.
Coal handlers.
Drivers and stablemen.
Electrical workers.
Folders of textiles.
Glove workers.
Hatters.
Hosiery workers.
Horse shoers.

Leather workers.
Leather grainers.
Leather tackers.
Longshoremen.
Machinists.
Malsters.
Musicians.
Potters.
Painters, decorators and paperhangers.
Printers.
Rug makers.
Rubber workers.
Retail clerks.
Steam engineers.
Steam and hot water fitters.
Saw smiths.
Stove mounters.
Stereotypers.
Terra cotta workers.
Textile workers.
Tide water boatmen.
Trunk and bag workers.
Wood, wire and metal lathers.
Wall paper machine printers and color mixers.

The following are some of the replies received:

Bookbinders—"Negroes are eligible."

Carriage and Wagon Makers.—"Have never had an application for membership from a negro, but think if one were made it would not be looked on favorably by members."

Saw Smiths—"Negroes are not eligible; do not regard them as a desirable class of people."

Folders of Textiles—"Negroes not eligible. Folders are finishers of all goods classed as textiles; these goods are 'yarded' on a machine by girls and passed on to the folder. He takes the goods and puts them up in style ordered for shipment to market. The machine girls would never consent to work for a negro."

Machinists—"Negroes not admitted; they and all races but whites are excluded by the constitution of the union."

Wet Leather Tackers' Union—"Negroes not admitted. If one were to apply he would be blackballed. The chief objection to them

is that in tacking leather on frames the workmen fill their mouths with tacks as shoemakers do, and take them from there to be driven through the leather into the frame. As the tacks are used over and over again the thought that a negro had had them in his mouth previously proved so disgusting that white men refused to work with them."

Potters—"Negroes not admitted, although nothing in the constitution or by-laws forbids their admission. If one were to apply he would be blackballed."

Terra Cotta Workers—"Negroes not admitted. Their admission is forbidden by the by-laws and by general custom."

Typographical Union—"There is nothing in the constitution or by-laws to prevent the admission of a negro if otherwise qualified. Two unions of the craft, however, state that negroes would surely be blackballed if any of them applied for membership."

Five other unions of the same trade say that applications for admission on the part of negroes if good workmen and of clean character would receive fair treatment.

Barbers—Negroes are eligible to membership as a general thing, but restrictions of a certain kind are imposed by some of the locals; thus, in one of them it is the rule that a negro barber who conducts a shop for persons of his own race exclusively, is expected to join a union made up entirely of men of his own color, or he may become directly connected with the International Union. But, if he conducts a shop in which white men only are worked upon, he may join the local with barbers of the white race.

Most of the communications received from barbers show a spirit of friendliness toward the negro as a fellow-craftsman.

Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers—There is nothing in the constitution of the national organization that prevents the admission of negroes as members if they should be otherwise qualified. Regulations relating to membership are, however, left to the locals, each of them being at liberty to make these as they see fit. Out of nineteen locals reporting thirteen unqualifiedly declare their readiness to admit negroes who know the trade and are up to the standard in other respects; the other six state that negroes would not be admitted as members under any circumstances.

Bakers and Confectioners.—Out of four reports received from as many local unions, three admit negroes and one does not. The constitution of the national union does not discriminate against the

negro, and he is not excluded from the single objecting local by any by-law; there is simply a general understanding among the members that one applying for admission shall be black-balled.

Textile Workers.—Negroes are not admitted to membership in the union, although it is admitted that one man of that race is working as a designer in the rug factory at which a large majority of the members are employed. This negro is not in the union and would not be admitted to it as a member.

Cotton Spinners.—Negroes are not admitted to membership; their exclusion is brought by a general understanding that an applicant of that race shall be black-balled, the sentiment of the whites being against them as fellow workmen.

Longshoremen and Marine Transport Workers.—The two unions of this organization that have reported, state that negroes would be gladly admitted to membership if they desired to connect themselves with the locals. Apparently, however, they do not wish to join, although many of them are working as longshoremen along the water front of New York and Philadelphia where they successfully compete with white men on the basis of lower wages. Longshore work is done in all southern sea coast cities almost entirely by negroes.

The officers of the unions are very anxious to bring the negroes into their organizations and will cheerfully admit them on terms of perfect equality with white men.

The secretary of one of these locals writes that in the cities of Philadelphia and Camden there are now about three thousand negroes working on the docks as longshoremen who might be persuaded to join a union but for the opposition of their employers and the consequent fear that by doing so they would loose their jobs. The negroes also appear to believe that if they demanded the same wages as white men, employers would prefer the latter, and that they should thereby loose the employment entirely.

Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers.—One union out of five reporting does not admit negroes. Their admission is not prevented by the constitution or by-laws, but, it is stated, if one should apply for membership he would be black-balled.

In striking contrast to this policy are the liberal views on the subject of the admission of negroes expressed by another union of the

same trade, the secretary of which states that "negro applicants would not be excluded if any should offer themselves, and it is only exceedingly narrow minded persons who would object to them." The same official summarizes the race question in this direct and forceful way: "The only difference I see between a negro and a white man is that one can be a *black* gentleman and the other can be a *white* gentleman; if neither one can be a gentleman, then both are alike loafers."

Electrical Workers.—Reports were received from five unions, all of which declare that negroes are not admitted to membership, and that an application having that end in view would not be received from a black man.

Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders.—Negroes are not admitted to any of the six unions reporting. The constitution limits membership to white men only. That this policy is not unanimously endorsed is shown by the secretary of one of these locals who writes: "The colored man, in my opinion, is more to be trusted and respected by the unions than many, if not any of the foreign races that are now coming to our shores. The negro very seldom takes the place of men on strike who are striving to better their condition."

Drivers and Stablemen.—"Negroes are not admited. Their exclusion would be effected by the black-ball if one should apply for membership."

Brewery Workmen.—"Negroes not admitted. No law against receiving them, but if one were to apply he would be rejected by the use of the black-ball."

Brewery Engineers and Firemen.—"Negroes are not admitted; they are excluded by the constitution of the union."

Carpenters and Joiners.—Under the constitution and by-laws of the organization, negroes are not excluded from membership, but two local unions out of the twenty-four reporting ,admit that notwithstanding the law on the subject, if an application for membership were to come to them from a negro, it would be rejected by vote of the members.

Glass Bottle Blowers.—Negroes are not excluded from membership, by any law of the organization, but four out of the eight locals reporting state that negroes would not under any circumstances be admitted.

Of the twenty-two organizations whose attitude toward the negro is shown in the foregoing paragraphs ,only six, viz.: The Typo-

graphical, barbers, painters, decorators and paperhangers, bakers and confectioners, longshoremen and wood, wire and metal lathers unions avow themselves willing to receive negroes as members; and of these, the barbers union alone report having workmen of the negro race on their rolls at the present time.

The other sixteen state that under no circumstances would negroes be admitted, notwtihstanding the fact that the national organizations of these trades, without exception, declare in favor of a contrary policy. But as before stated, this is one of the important details, the regulation of which local unions reserve to themselves. It seldom happens that a uniform policy is pursued by all the locals of the same trade; some are cordially willing to accept the negro as a member when he comes, and others will not have him on any terms.

However, a great majority of all the unions from whom answers to the circulars were obtained announce themselves as unreservedly in favor of equal opportunities for whites and blacks, and assert their readiness to welcome to their ranks all workmen of good character without regard to creed or color, who are properly qualified to practice their trades. These have, for the most part, stated their friendly attitude toward the negro in the fewest possible words, evidently regarding their position as one not requiring extended argument or explanation.

From this showing, it would appear that hostility of white workmen is no longer the obstacle to the negro's industrial progress it once was. That there is still some prejudice is shown by the frank avowals of the unions quoted above; if it extends beyond these and is found among others to any great extent, the sentiment is not strong enough to cause its open avowal.

The next thing to consider in the relation of the negro to organized labor is the extent to which he has availed himself of the privilege of joining such unions as are open to him. On this point the reports from one hundred and ninety-six locals, embracing all the skilled or semi-skilled occupations in which negroes in any number have found employment, shows at the present time only fifty-four of that race in New Jersey holding membership in trade organizations with white men; there are no locals composed entirely of negroes.

The colored men are divided among the trades as follows: Barbers, eighteen; carpenters and joiners, seven; steam engineers, seven; tide water boatmen, six; rubber workers, five; musicians, three; leather workers, two; painters, decorators and paperhangers, two;

printers, one; wire and metal lathers, one; shoemakers one; and bottlers and drivers, one.

These are of course not all the negroes employed at the above named and other trades; a large majority of the organizations report negro work men employed at their crafts, some in New Jersey and other northern and eastern states, but principally in the South, who have never applied for admission to the unions.

These men, it is asserted, work for much lower wages than white unionists in the same trades.

Only five applications of negro mechanics for admission to the unions of their crafts are reported as having been rejected. These were—one carpenter, one electric worker, one painter and paper hanger, and two steam engineers. The reason assigned by the unions for refusing to admit the painter and paper hanger, and the carpenter was that neither of them were competent workmen. No explanation is given of why the others were rejected.

The answers received in reply to the request for a statement of the chief objections to negroes, where they are not received into unions, or in cases where white men particularly object to working with them, are not numerous and shed but little light upon the question. The following are some of them:

Boiler Makers.—"The principal objection to the negro lies in the fact that he *is* a negro and consequently very servile; negroes do not live as well or require as much for support as whitemen. They, therefore, work for much less wages; a majority of them are not sufficiently intelligent to have any ambition in life beyond supplying the merely material necessaries which they are contented with in the cheapest and rudest forms.

"There is little or no ambition among them to found or improve homes and accomplish other things that have a bearing on the decorative or intellectual side of life. Their indifference to influences that make for refinement will keep them backward in the march of progress until the race awakes to an appreciation of higher things."

Carpenters and Joiners.—"Their color and low instincts make them undesirable associates for white men."

Glass Bottle Blowers.—"Do not believe the average negro is capable of acquiring the skill necessary to become a successful glass blower. They are naturally lazy and are not clean in their habits. Close association with them, such as is unavoidable in a glass house, would be a very disagreeable experience for white men; then, too,

whitemen would not care to use blow pipes that negroes had had in their mouths."

Longshoremen.—"Negroes are not objectionable to white men engaged in our work, and we would be glad to have them in the union. They do not, however, show any great desire to come in, principally because they will bid for employment at lower rates than unionists demand."

Cotton Spinners.—"His color and certain well known disagreeable personal characteristics are the great objections to the negro. White workmen will never be reconciled to working with them, until a great change in these respects has taken place."

Bakers and Confectioners.—"The negro is naturally lazy and it is doubtful if the race can ever become capable of doing work requiring extreme and long sustained physical exertion. There are other objections to him as a workman and an associate, but these would probably disappear in time if he could be induced to join the unions and profit by the protection and the morally elevating influences of unionism. In the South, three bakers out of every five are negroes; there seems to be no objection to him in that capacity there, but in the North, the public seems to object to his handling bread or other flour foods in their raw state."

Cigar Makers.—"Race prejudice seems to be the only grounds on which opposition to the negro can be explained. This sentiment is widespread and has its origin in nature which has imposed certain moral and physical characteristics for the possession of which it is hardly fair to hold the race responsible. It is questionable whether a cigar manufacturer would employ a negro even if he knew the trade, and white men would almost surely refuse to work with him. Smokers would generally refuse to smoke cigars made by negroes because of the disagreeable odor thrown off by them when perspiring. Then, too, as a race they are given to deceitfulness and are altogether unreliable. The negroes referred to are these found in and about the cities of the North; the writer has nothing to say against those of the Southern states or of Cuba."

Potters.—"It would be almost impossible to say on just what particular grounds negroes are objected to. The best explanation would probably be that they are by nature and habits so unlike whites that no common ground can be found on which something like sociability with them might be established."

Terra Cotta Workers.—"Have much trouble with the few negroes employed here. They are dishonest and utterly untruthful."

Machinist.—"Men in the trade would not work or have any kind of intercourse with negroes as shopmates. In occupations in which both races are employed, negroes work for much lower wages than are paid to white men; if they were to become machinists in numbers, wages in the trade would go down through their competition."

The general observations, embodying such facts or opinions regarding the negro show in the main a disposition on the part of the unionists to treat him with kindness and sympathy. While some lay stress on certain moral and intellectual delinquencies and defects that are alleged to be general among negroes, and express opinions unfavorable to their capacity for acquiring a knowledge of the higher mechanical arts, or even adapting themselves to the requirements of lower grades of labor, so as to be tolerable co-workers with white men, a great majority of the unions who have taken the trouble to write on the subject at all, speak of the race without even a shadow of unkindness and advance highly optimistic views as to the change to be effected in the race traits and characteristics of negroes under the influence of the better environment which the race will win for itself, if tolerance and encouragement are extended to it by the whites.

Many of them plead earnestly for recognition of the negro's right to equal opportunities, and urge that independent of the moral obligation always resting upon the strong to succor the weak, broad, enlightened, self-interest leaves no course open to the white men but to encourage and assist the black in his struggle for self-advancement.

With the unions open to them it is strange that so few negroes are found in the ranks of organized labor; even in the unions of unskilled workmen such as longshoremen, teamsters, bricklayers, etc., in which they would be welcomed, there are very few negroes compared to the vast number of them working at these occupations.

It would seem that the only plausible reason for their not seeking the benefits and advantages offered by trade organizations, is that they can do better as independent workmen. The negro understands fully that under union rules, with an arbitarily fixed wage rate to which he must adhere, his chances of employment would be seriously lessened. The average employer if obliged to pay the same wages to whites and blacks would prefer the former, and the negro would thus be deprived of the only advantage he now enjoys in the competition for work, that is, a willingness to take whatever wages he can get.

That there are practically speaking no negroes in any of the skilled trades unions is easily understood. In the first place, notwithstanding the theoretical freedom which he enjoys to join these organizations, there is a lurking consciousness in the minds of the few who are qualified for membership, that they are not wanted and that most, if not all, the white members would look upon them with distrust and dislike. Then too, most negro mechanics have learned their trades in ways not regarded as "regular" by union rules, which circumstance in itself would in many of the trades, insure their rejection in case they applied for membership, as it would white men also, notwithstanding they might be fully up to the standard of proficiency in all branches of the trade. As for negroes learning trades under union apprenticeship rules, the chances of their ever being able to do so in any number seems very remote.

A correspondent, who is an officer of a union, writes on this subject and what he says regarding his own trade may be taken as true of all, or at least of those requiring much skill: "I do not think negroes have much chance to learn cigar making in this locality as the rules are so narrow that it is hard for even a white boy to get a chance to learn."

It seems to be certain that negroes are admitted to unions only because of the necessity of guarding against the reduction of wages which follows their competition. In occupations to which large numbers of them are atracted, almost altogether those requiring but little skill, negroes find easy admittance to the unions because it is in these lines that their competition is felt most severely. That so very few of them join is proof that the interested character of the welcome offered is pretty well understood, and that a surrender of the right to work for such wages as may be offered which must follow their being unionized, would simply mean the loss of such employment as they now have in these occupations.