

disruption of our industrial establishment by causing negroes to understand that they are safe where they are.

The Macon *Telegraph* said of negro labor: "If we lose it, we go bankrupt." Yet this same paper only a few months before was advocating the sending of 100,000 negroes into Mexico to conquer the "mongrel breed," and at the same time rid the South of that many worthless negroes.

The black man has no quarrel with the Mexican, but, on the other hand, he certainly has a disagreement with conditions as they affect him in the South, and, when he desires to improve those conditions by getting away from them, he must be checked. Plenty of "sound advice" is given him about staying in the South among his friends and under the same old conditions. The bugaboo of cold weather is put before him to frighten him, of race antagonism and sundry other things, but not one word about better treatment is suggested to lighten the burden, no sane and reasonable remedy offered.

The black labor is the best labor the South can get, no other would work long under the same conditions. It has been faithful and loyal, but that loyalty can be undermined, witness the exodus.

A letter published in the *Montgomery Advertiser*¹ truly says:

And the negro will not come back once he leaves the South.

The World War is bringing many changes and a chance for the negro to enter broader fields. With the "tempting bait" of higher wages, shorter hours, better schools and better treatment, all the preachments of the so-called race leaders will fall on deaf ears.

It is probable that the "well informed negro," who told the Birmingham editor that it was good schools that were drawing the negro, could have given other and more potent reasons had he been so minded. He could have told how deep down in the negro's heart he has no love for proscription, segregation, lynchings, the petty persecutions and cruelties against him, nor for the arresting of "fifty niggers for what three of 'em done," even if it takes all of this to uphold the scheme of civilization.

From Savannah alone, three thousand negroes went, from sixteen year old boys to men of sixty years. There must be something radically wrong when aged negroes are willing to make the change. There is greater unrest among negroes than those in high places are aware.

Let the *Advertiser* speak out in the same masterful way, with the same punch and pep for a square deal for the negro, that it does for democracy and the right for local self-government.

What was the attitude of the northern whites toward the migration? Although the North had been accustomed to the adding of a million foreigners annually to her population, these newcomers were white people and as such did not occasion the

¹ *The Advertiser*, Montgomery, Alabama, September 22, 1917.