

It is difficult, if not impossible, to check the operation of an economic law, and it is perfectly natural that men should seek fields of labor in which they are promised higher wages and better conditions, but those who go and those who encourage the going of them should get the facts of the so-called inducements and learn the truth about them before lending their influence to a movement that can not only promise no permanent good to laborers, but works untold injury to the foundation of their own economic structure.

Another phase of the matter, and one that invites the condemnation of all honest persons, is the manner in which negro labor is at present exploited to satisfy the selfish whims of a group of misguided and ill-advised agitators and fanatics on the race question. All of the nice talk about "fleeing from southern oppression," and going where "equal rights and social privileges" await them is pure buncombe. It is strange that negro labor should stand the oppression of the South for fifty years and suddenly make up its mind to move northward as an evidence of its resentment.

The truth of the matter is that the element of negroes in the South that feel the oppression most is not concerned in the migration movement. Nor are they going to leave their homes and accumulations of half a century as a solution of their problems. They are going to remain here and fight out their constitutional rights accorded them here in the land of their birth.

The editor of *The Star of Zion*, Charlotte, North Carolina,¹ conceded the right of the negro to go wherever he had opportunity to go; on the other hand, it was doubtful whether a wholesale exodus was for the best. He said:

While I concede the black man's right to go where he likes, for he has the right of liberty and the pursuit of happiness, yet I doubt the wisdom of such wholesale exodus from the South. There are some things which the negro needs far more than his wages, or some of the rights for which he contends. He needs conservation of his moral life.

In the North a negro is brought face to face with new problems; among the many is the problem of adjusting himself to the abundance of freedom into which he comes so suddenly. His new freedom brings him new changes, as well as new opportunities, for among the roses there lies the thorn. . . . While the inducements of the North are very alluring, in the end the negro problem must be wrought out in the South.

Concerning the *Journal and Guide's* position, the Raleigh, North Carolina, *Independent*² took issue and said:

Our disagreement with our estimable contemporary, the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, we are persuaded, is far less real than seeming. Essentially we

¹ July 19, 1917.

² April 28, 1917.