

Report of the minority, in report and testimony of the select committee to Investigate the causes of the removal of the Negroes from the southern states to the northern states, in three parts

This report, written by the minority party of the Senate select committee investigating the Exodus, outlines the minority's conclusions about the reasons for black emigration to the North during the Reconstruction period. This committee, composed of majority and minority parties, had taken testimony from hundreds of people having direct knowledge of the exodus movement. In essence, the minority party concluded that the Northern Republican Party and emigrant aid organizations had not persuaded blacks in the South to emigrate to the North. Instead, the unfavorable condition of life in the South had caused this mass exodus. The minority members were William Windom, a Republican senator from Minnesota, and Henry W. Blair, a Republican senator from New Hampshire.

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Mr. WINDOM, from the Committee to Investigate the Causes which have led to the Emigration of Negroes from the Southern to the Northern States, submitted the following

REPORT OF THE MINORITY.

The undersigned, a minority of the committee appointed under resolution of the Senate of December 15, 1879, to investigate the causes which have led to the emigration of negroes from the Southern to the Northern States, submit the following report:

In the month of December last a few hundred colored men, women, and children, discontented with their condition in North Carolina, and hoping to improve it, were emigrating to Indiana.

This movement, though utterly insignificant in comparison with the vastly greater numbers which were moving from other Southern States into Kansas, seemed to be considered of very much more importance, in certain quarters, on account of its alleged political purposes and bearing. The theory upon which the investigation was asked was that the emigration into the State of Indiana was the result of a conspiracy on the part of Northern leaders of the Republican party to colonize that State with negroes for political purposes. The utter absurdity of this theory should have been apparent to everybody, for if the Republican party, or its leaders, proposed to import negroes into Indiana for political purposes, why take them from North Carolina? Why import them from a State where the Republicans hope and expect to carry the election, when there were thousands upon thousands ready and anxious to come from States certainly Democratic. Why transport them by rail at heavy expense half way across the continent when they could have taken them from Kentucky without any expense, or brought them up the Mississippi River by steamers at merely nominal cost? Why send twenty-five thousand to Kansas to swell her 40,000 Republican majority, and only seven or eight hundred to Indiana? These considerations brand with falsehood and folly the charge that the exodus was a political movement induced by Northern partisan leaders. And yet to prove this absurd proposition the committee devoted six months of hard and fruitless labor, during which they examined one hundred and fifty-nine witnesses, selected from all parts of the country, mainly with reference to their supposed readiness to prove said theory, expended over \$30,000, and filled three large volumes of testimony.

The undersigned feel themselves authorized to say that there is no evidence whatever even tending to sustain the charge that the Republican party, or any of its leaders, have been instrumental, either directly or indirectly, in aiding or encouraging these people to come from their homes in the South to any of the Northern States. A good deal of complaint was made that certain "aid societies" in the North had encouraged and aided this migration, and a futile attempt was made to prove that these societies were acting in the interest of the Republican party. Upon inquiry, however, it was ascertained that their purposes



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were purely charitable and had no connection whatever with any political motive or movement. They were composed almost wholly of colored people, and were brought into existence solely to afford temporary relief to the destitute and suffering emigrants who had already come into the Northern and Western States.

In the spring of 1879 thousands of colored people, unable longer to endure the intolerable hardships, injustice, and suffering inflicted upon them by a class of Democrats in the South, had, in utter despair, fled panic-stricken from their homes and sought protection among strangers in a strange land. Homeless, penniless, and in rags, these poor people were thronging the wharves of Saint Louis, crowding the steamers on the Mississippi River, and in pitiable destitution throwing themselves upon the charity of Kansas. Thousands more were congregating along the banks of the Mississippi River, hailing the passing steamers, and imploring them for a passage to the land of freedom, where the rights of citizens are respected and honest toil rewarded by honest compensation. The newspapers were filled with accounts of their destitution, and the very air was burdened with the cry of distress from a class of American citizens flying from persecutions which they could no longer endure. Their piteous tales of outrage, suffering and wrong touched the hearts of the more fortunate members of their race in the North and West, and aid societies, designed to afford temporary relief, and composed largely, almost wholly, of colored people, were organized in Washington, Saint Louis, Topeka, and in various other places. That they were organized to induce migration for political purposes, or to aid or encourage these people to leave their homes for any purpose, or that they ever contributed one dollar to that end, is utterly untrue, and there is absolutely nothing in the testimony to sustain such a charge. Their purposes and objects were purely charitable. They found a race of wretched, miserable people flying from oppression and wrong, and they sought to relieve their distress. The refugees were hungry, and they fed them; in rags, and they clothed them; homeless and they sheltered them; destitute, and they found employment for them—only this and nothing more.

The real origin of the exodus movement and the organizations at the South which have promoted it are very clearly stated by the witnesses who have been most active in regard to it.

Henry Adams, of Shreveport, Louisiana, an uneducated colored laborer, but a man of very unusual natural abilities, and, so far as the committee could learn, entirely reliable and truthful, states that he entered the United States Army in 1866 and remained in it until 1869; that when he left the Army he returned to his former home at Shreveport, and, finding the condition of his race intolerable, he and a number of other men who had also been in the Army set themselves to work to better the condition of their people.

In 1870—

He says—

a parcel of us got together and said we would organize ourselves into a committee and look into affairs and see the true condition of our race, to see whether it was possible we could stay under a people who held us in bondage or not.

That committee increased until it numbered about five hundred, and Mr. Adams says:

Some of the members of the committee was ordered by the committee to go into every State in the South where we had been slaves, and post one another from time to time about the true condition of our race, and nothing but the truth.



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In answer to the question whether they traveled over various States he said :

Yes, sir; and we worked, some of us, worked our way from place to place, and went from State to State and worked—some of them did—amongst our people, in the fields, everywhere, to see what sort of a living our people lived—whether we could live in the South amongst the people that held us as slaves or not. We continued that on till 1874.

Every one paid his own expenses, except the one we sent to Louisiana and Mississippi. We took money out of our pockets and sent him, and said to him you must now go to work. You can't find out anything till you get amongst them. You can talk as much as you please, but you have got to go right into the field and work with them and sleep with them to know all about them.

I think about one hundred or one hundred and fifty went from one place or another.

Q. What was the character of the information that they gave you?—A. Well, the character of the information they brought to us was very bad, sir.

Q. Do you remember any of these reports that you got from members of your committee?—A. Yes, sir; they said in several parts where they was that the land rent was still higher there in that part of the country than it was where we first organized it, and the people was still being whipped, some of them, by the old owners, the men that had owned them as slaves, and some of them was being cheated out of their crops just the same as they was there.

Q. Was anything said about their personal and political rights in these reports as to how they were treated?—A. Yes; some of them stated that in some parts of the country where they voted they would be shot. Some of them stated that if they voted the Democratic ticket they would not be injured.

Q. Now, let us understand more distinctly, before we go any further, the kind of people who composed that association. The committee, as I understand you, was composed entirely of laboring people?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did it include any politicians of either color, white or black?—A. No politicians didn't belong to it, because we didn't allow them to know nothing about it, because we was afraid that if we allowed the colored politicianer to belong to it he would tell it to the Republican politicianers, and from that the men that was doing all this to us would get hold of it too, and then get after us.

Q. About what time did you lose all hope and confidence that your condition could be tolerable in the Southern States?—A. Well, we never lost all hopes in the world till 1877.

Q. Why did you lose all hope in that year?—A. Well, we found ourselves in such condition that we looked around and we seed that there was no way on earth, it seemed, that we could better our condition there, and we-discussed that thoroughly in our organization in May. We said that the whole South—every State in the South—had got into the hands of the very men that held us slaves—from one thing to another—and we thought that the men that held us slaves was holding the reins of government over our heads in every respect almost, even the constable up to the governor. We felt we had almost as well be slaves under these men. In regard to the whole matter that was discussed it came up in every council. Then we said there was no hope for us and we had better go.

Q. You say, then, that in 1877 you lost all hope of being able to remain in the South, and you began to think of moving somewhere else?—A. Yes; we said we was going if we had to run away and go into the woods.

Q. About how many did this committee consist of before you organized your council? Give us the number as near as you can tell.—A. As many as five hundred in all.

Q. The committee, do you mean?—A. Yes; the committee has been that large.

Q. What was the largest number reached by your colonization council, in your best judgment?—A. Well, it is not exactly five hundred men belonging to the council that we have in our council, but they all agreed to go with us and enroll their names with us from time to time, so that they have now got at this time ninety-eight thousand names enrolled.

Q. Then through that council, as sort of subscribers to its purpose and acts and for carrying out its objects, there were ninety-eight thousand names?—A. Yes; ninety-eight thousand names enrolled.

Q. In what parts of the country were these ninety-eight thousand people scattered?—A. Well, some in Louisiana—the majority of them in Louisiana—and some in Texas, and some in Arkansas. We joins Arkansas.

Q. Were there any in Mississippi?—A. Yes, sir; a few in Mississippi.

Q. And a few in Alabama?—A. Yes, sir; a few in Alabama, too.

Q. Did the organization extend at all into other States farther away?—A. O, yes, sir.



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Q. Have you members in all the Southern States?—A. Not in every one, but in a great many of the others.

Q. Are these members of that colonization council in communication as to the condition of your race, and as to the best thing to be done to alleviate their troubles?—A. O, yes.

Q. What do you know about inducements being held out from politicians of the North, or from politicians anywhere else, to induce these people to leave their section of country and go into the Northern or Western States?—A. There is nobody has written letters of that kind, individually—not no white persons, I know, not to me, to induce anybody to come.

Q. Well, to any of the other members of your council?—A. No, I don't think to any of the members. If they have, they haven't said nothing to me about it.

It appears also from the evidence of Samuel L. Perry, of North Carolina, a colored man, who accompanied most of the emigrants from that State to Indiana, and who had more to do with the exodus from that quarter than any other man, that the movement had its origin as far back as 1872, as the following questions and answers will show:

Q. You have heard a good deal of this testimony with reference to this exodus from North Carolina. Now begin at the beginning and tell us all you know about it.—A. Well, the beginning, I suppose, was in this way: The first idea or the first thing was, we used to have little meetings to talk over these matters. In 1872 we first received some circulars or pamphlets from O. F. Davis, of Omaha, Nebraska.

Q. In 1872?—A. Yes, sir; in 1872—giving a description of government lands and railroads that could be got cheap; and we held little meetings then; that is, we would meet and talk about it Sunday evenings—that is, the laboring class of our people—the only ones I knew anything about; I had not much to do with the big professional negroes, the rich men. I did not associate with them much, but I got among the workmen, and they would take these pamphlets and read them over.

Mr. Perry says that the feeling in favor of migrating subsided somewhat, but sprung up again in 1876. From that time down to 1879 there were frequent consultations upon the subject, much dissatisfaction expressed respecting their condition, and a desire to emigrate to some part of the West. He says about "that time I was a subscriber to the New York Herald, and from an article in that paper the report was that the people were going to Kansas, and we thought we could go to Kansas too; that we could get a colony to go West. That was last spring. We came back and formed ourselves into a colony of some hundred men." They did not, however, begin their westward movements until the fall of 1879, when it being ascertained by the railroad companies that a considerable number of people were proposing to migrate from North Carolina to the West, several railroad companies, notably the Baltimore and Ohio, offered to certain active and influential colored men \$1 per head for all the passengers they could procure for the respective competing lines.

By reference to the evidence, part 3, page 136, it will be seen that the emigration movement in Alabama originated as far back as the year 1871, when an organization of colored people, called the State Labor Union, delegated Hon. George F. Marlow to visit Kansas, and other parts of the West, for the purpose of examining that country and reporting back to a future convention his views as to the expediency of removing thereto. A convention of colored people was held again in 1872, at which Mr. Marlow made the following glowing report of the condition of things in Kansas and the inducements that State offered to the colored people. He said:

In August, 1871, being delegated by your president for the purpose, I visited the State of Kansas, and here give the results of my observations, briefly stated.

It is a new State, and as such possesses many advantages over the old.

It is much more productive than most other States.

What is raised yields more profit than elsewhere, as it is raised at less expense.

The weather and roads enable you to do more work here than elsewhere.

The climate is mild and pleasant.



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Winters short and require little food for stock.

Fine grazing country; stock can be grazed all winter.

The population is enterprising, towns and villages spring up rapidly, and great profits arise from all investments.

Climate dry, and land free from swamps.

The money paid to doctors in less healthy regions can here be used to build up a house.

People quiet and orderly, schools and churches to be found in every neighborhood, and ample provision for free schools is made by the State.

Money plenty, and what you raise commands a good price.

Fruits of all kinds easily grown and sold at large profits.

Railroads are being built in every direction.

The country is well watered.

Salt and coal are plentiful.

It is within the reach of every man, no matter how poor, to have a home in Kansas. The best lands are to be had at from \$2 to \$10 an acre, *on time*. The different railroads own large tracts of land, and offer liberal inducements to emigrants. You can get good land in some places for \$1.25 an acre. The country is mostly open prairie, level, with deep, rich soil, producing from forty to one hundred bushels of corn and wheat to the acre. The corn grows about eight or nine feet high, and I never saw better fruit anywhere than there.

The report was adopted.

The feeling of the colored people in that State in 1872 was well expressed by Hon. Robert H. Knox, of Montgomery, a prominent colored citizen, who, in addressing the convention, spoke as follows:

I have listened with great attention to the report of the commissioner appointed by authority of the State Labor Union to visit Kansas, and while I own the inducements held out to the laboring man in that far-off State are much greater than those enjoyed by our State, I yet would say let us rest here awhile longer; let us trust in God, the President, and Congress to give us what is most needed here, personal security to the laboring masses, the suppression of violence, disorder, and kukluxism, the protection which the Constitution and laws of the United States guarantee, and to which as citizens and men we are entitled. Failing in these, it is time then, I repeat, to desert the State and seek homes elsewhere where there may be the fruition of hopes inaugurated when by the hand of Providence the shackles were stricken from the limbs of four million men, where there may be enjoyed in peace and happiness by your own fireside the earnings of your daily toil.

Benjamin Singleton, an aged colored man, now residing in Kansas, swears that he began the work of inducing his race to migrate to that State as early as 1869, and that he has brought mainly from Tennessee, and located in two colonies—one in Cherokee County, and another in Lyons County, Kansas—a total of 7,432 colored people. The old man spoke in the most touching manner of the sufferings and wrongs of his people in the South, and in the most glowing terms of their condition in their new homes; and when asked as to who originated the movement, he proudly asserted, "I am the father of the exodus." He said that during these years since he began the movement he has paid from his own pocket over \$600 for circulars, which he has caused to be printed and circulated all over the Southern States, advising all who can pay their way to come to Kansas. In these circulars he advised the colored people of the advantages of living in a free State, and told them how well the emigrants whom he had taken there were getting on. He says that the emigrants whom he has taken to Kansas are happy and doing well. The old man insists with great enthusiasm that he is the "whole cause of the Kansas immigration," and is very proud of his achievement.

Here, then, we have conclusive proof from the negroes themselves that they have been preparing for this movement for many years. Organizations to this end have existed in many States, and the agents of such organizations have traveled throughout the South. One of these organizations alone kept one hundred and fifty men in the field for years, traveling among their brethren and secretly discussing this among other

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means of relief. As stated by Adams and Perry, politicians were excluded, and the movement was confined wholly to the working classes.

The movement has doubtless been somewhat stimulated by circulars from railroad companies and State emigration societies which have found their way into the South, but these have had comparatively little effect. The following specimen of these emigration documents, which was gotten up and circulated by Indiana Democrats, printed at a Democratic printing office, and written by a Democrat, in our judgment appeals more strongly to the imagination and wants of the negro than any we have been able to find:

In every county of the State there is an asylum where those who are unable to work and have no means of support are cared for at the public expense.

Laborers who work by the month or by the year make their own contract with the employer, and all disputes subsequently arising are settled by legal processes in the proper courts, *everybody being equal before the law in Indiana.* The price of farm labor has varied considerably in the last twenty years. *About \$16 per month may be assumed as about the average per month, and this is understood to include board and lodging at the farm-house.* This amount is paid in current money at the end of each month, unless otherwise stipulated in the contract. Occasionally a tenement house is found on the larger farms, where a laborer lives with his family, and either rents a portion of the farm or cultivates it on special contract with the landlord. *With us there is no class of laborers as such. The young man who to-day may be a hired laborer at monthly wages, may in five years from now be himself a proprietor, owning the soil he cultivates and paying wages to laborers. The upward road is open to all, and its highest elevation is attainable by industry, economy, and perseverance.*

Sixteen dollars per month, with board! Everybody equal before the law! No class of laborers as such! The hired man of to-day himself the owner of a farm in five years! No cheating of tenants, but everything paid in current money. And if all this will not attract the negro he is told there is an "asylum in every county" to which he can go when unable to support himself. The document also promises to everybody "free schools" in "brick or stone school-houses," and says they have "\$2,000,000 greater school fund than any State in the Union." These Democratic documents have been circulated by the thousand, and doubtless many of them have found their way into the negro cabins of North Carolina. It is not surprising that the negro looks with longing eyes to that great and noble State.

CAUSES OF THE EXODUS.

There is surely some adequate cause for such a movement. The majority of the committee have utterly failed to find it, or, if found, to recognize it. When it was found that any of their own witnesses were ready to state causes which did not accord with their theory they were dismissed without examination, as in the cases of Ruby and Stafford, and a half dozen others who were brought from Kansas, but who on their arrival here were found to entertain views not agreeable to the majority.

We regret that a faithful and honest discussion of this subject compels a reference to the darkest, bloodiest, and most shameful chapter of our political history. Gladly would we avoid it, but candor compels us to say that the volume which shall faithfully record the crimes which, in the name of Democracy, have been committed against the citizenship, the lives, and the personal rights of these people, and which have finally driven them in utter despair from their homes, will stand forever without a parallel in the annals of Christian civilization. In discussing these sad and shameful events, we wish it distinctly understood that we do not arraign the whole people nor even the entire Democratic party

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of the States in which they have occurred. The colored and other witnesses all declare that the lawlessness from which they have suffered does not meet the approval of the better class of Democrats at the South. They are generally committed by the reckless, dissolute classes who unfortunately too often control and dominate the Democratic party and dictate its policy. We have no doubt there are many Democrats in the South who deeply regret this condition of things, and who would gladly welcome a change, but they are in a helpless, and we fear a hopeless, minority in many sections of that country.

The unfortunate and inexcusable feature of the case is that, however much they may deplore such lawlessness, they have never, so far as we can learn, declined to accept its fruits. They may regret the violence and crimes by which American citizens are prevented from voting, but they rejoice in the Democratic victories which result therefrom. So long as they shall continue thus to accept the fruits of crime, the criminals will have but little fear of punishment or restraint, and the lawless conduct which is depopulating some sections of their laboring classes will go on. There is another unfortunate feature of this matter. So long as crimes against American citizenship shall continue to suppress Republican majorities, and to give a "solid South" to the Democracy, there will be found enough Democrats at the North who will shut their eyes to the means by which it is accomplished, and seek to cover up and excuse the conduct of their political partisans at the South.

This is well illustrated by the report of the majority of the committee. In the presence of most diabolic outrages clearly proven; in the face of the declaration of thousands of refugees that they had fled because of the insecurity of their lives and property at the South, and because the Democratic party of that section had, by means too shocking and shameful to relate, deprived them of their rights as American citizens; in the face of the fact that it has been clearly shown by the evidence that organizations of colored laborers, one of which numbered ninety-eight thousand, have existed for many years and extending into many States of the South, designed to improve their condition by emigration—in the face of all these facts the majority of the committee can see no cause for the exodus growing out of such wrongs, but endeavor to charge it to the Republicans of the North.

In view of this fact, it is our painful duty to point out some of the real causes of this movement. It is, however, quite impossible to enumerate all or any considerable part of the causes of discontent and utter despair which have finally culminated in this movement. To do so would be to repeat a history of violence and crime which for fifteen years have red-dened with the blood of innocent victims many of the fairest portions of our country; to do so would be to read the numberless volumes of sworn testimony which have been carefully corded away in the crypt and basement of this Capitol, reciting shocking instances of crime, crying from the ground against the perpetrators of the deeds which they record. The most which we can hope to do within the limits of this report is to present a very few facts which shall be merely illustrative of the conditions which have driven from their homes and the graves of their fathers an industrious, patient, and law-abiding people, whom we are bound by every obligation of honor and patriotism to protect in their personal and political rights and privileges.

We begin with the State of North Carolina because the migration from that State has been comparatively insignificant, and also because the conditions there are more favorable to the colored race than in any of

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the other cotton States of the South. Owing to the lack of funds, and to the time employed in the examination of witnesses called by the majority, the Republican members of the committee summoned no witnesses from the State of North Carolina, and were obliged to content themselves with such facts as could be obtained from one or two persons who happened to be in this city, and such other facts as were brought out upon cross-examination of the witnesses called by the other side. By the careful selection of a few well-to-do and more fortunate colored men from that State, the majority of the committee secured some evidence tending to show that a portion of the negroes of North Carolina are exceptionally well treated and contented, and yet upon cross-examination of their own witnesses facts were disclosed which showed that, even there, conditions exist which are ample to account for the migration of the entire colored population.

There are three things in that State which create great discontent among the colored people: First, the abridgment of their rights of self-government; second, their disadvantages as to common schools; third, discriminations against them in the courts; and, fourth, the memory of Democratic outrages. Prior to Democratic rule the people of each county elected five commissioners, who had supervision over the whole county, and who chose the judges of elections. The Democrats changed the constitution so as to take this power from the people, and gave to the general assembly authority to appoint these officers. This they regard not only as practically depriving them of self-government, but, as stated by one of the witnesses, Hon. R. C. Badger, as placing the elections, even in Republican townships, wholly under the control of the Democrats, who thereby "have the power to count up the returns and throw out the balance for any technicality, exactly as Garcelon & Co. did in Maine." This creates much dissatisfaction, because they believe they are cheated out of their votes. The negro values the ballot more than anything else, because he knows that it is his only means of defense and protection. A law which places all the returning boards in the hands of his political opponents necessarily and justly produces discontent.

Next to the ballot the negro values the privileges of common schools, for in them he sees the future elevation of his race. The prejudice even in North Carolina against white teachers of colored schools seems to have abated but little since the war. Mr. Badger, when cross-examined on this point, said:

Q. Is there any prejudice still remaining there against white teachers of colored schools?—A. I think there is.

Q. Will you explain it?—A. I cannot explain it, except by the prejudices between the races.

Q. You mean, white persons teaching a colored school lose social status?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Now, a white lady who comes from the North and teaches a colored school, to what extent is she tabooed?—A. I don't think she would have any acquaintances in white society.

Q. Would she be any quicker invited into white society than a colored woman?—A. Just about the same.

This fact contains within itself a volume of testimony. It shows that the negro is still regarded as a sort of social and political pariah, whom no white person may teach without incurring social ostracism and being degraded to the level of the social outcast he or she would elevate in the scale of being. Is it surprising that the negro is dissatisfied with his condition and desires to emigrate to some country where his children may hope for better things?

The most serious complaints, however, which are made against the



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treatment of colored citizens of North Carolina is that justice is not fairly administered in the courts as between themselves and the whites. On this point the evidence of Mr. R. C. Badger reveals a condition of things to which no people can long submit. Here is his illustration of the manner in which justice is usually meted out as between the negroes and the whites:

Q. How about the discrimination in the courts as between the whites and blacks?—
A. That is principally in matters of larceny. In such cases the presumption is reversed as to the negro. A white man can't be convicted without the fullest proof, and with the negroes, in matters between themselves, such as assault and battery, they get as fair a trial as the whites. At the January term of our court Judge Avery presided. A white man and a colored woman were indicted for an affray. The woman was in her husband's barn getting out corn; they were going to move, and the white man came down there and said, "You seem to have a good time laughing here this morning," and she said, yes, she had a right to laugh. He said, "You are getting that corn out, and you would have made more if you had stuck to your husband." She seemed to be a sort of termagant, and she said nobody said that about her unless you told them. He made some insulting remark, and she made something in return to him, and he took a billet of wood and struck her on the shoulder, and he pulled a pistol and beat her with it, and she went for him to kill him. *They found the man not guilty and they found her guilty*, but Judge Avery set the verdict aside and ordered the case *nolle prossed* against her.

Q. Do you think that is a fair sample of the justice they get?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think they will convict a colored woman in order to get a chance to turn loose a white man?—A. Yes, sir.

Mr. Badger was not our witness. He was called by the majority, but he is a gentleman of high character, the son of an ex-member of this body, and thoroughly acquainted with the condition of things in his State. He puts the case just mentioned as a "fair sample" of North Carolina justice toward the negro. It is true the judge set aside the verdict, but this does not change the fact that before a North Carolina jury the negro has but little hope of justice.

Back of all these things lies the distrust of Democracy which was inspired during the days when the "Kuklux," the "White Brotherhood," the "Universal Empire," and the "Stonewall Guard" spread terror and desolation over the State in order to wrest it from Republicanism to Democracy. The memory of those dark days and bloody deeds, the prejudice which still forbids white ladies to teach colored schools, and denies "even-handed justice" in the courts, and the usurpations which place the returning boards all in the hands of Democrats, have inspired a feeling of discontent which has found expression in the efforts of a few to leave the State. These facts, taken in connection with the bonus of one dollar per head offered by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company (a Democratic corporation represented by a Democratic agent) to leading colored men who would secure passengers for their road, has led to the emigration of some seven or eight hundred colored people from that State, and the only wonder is that thousands instead of hundreds have not gone.

LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI.

The States of Louisiana and Mississippi have furnished the larger portion of the migration to Kansas, and as the conditions which caused the exodus are the same in both of these States, we may speak of them together. No single act of wrong has inspired this movement, but a long series of oppression, injustice, and violence, extending over a period of fifteen years. These people have been long-suffering and wonderfully patient, but the time came when they could endure it no longer and they resolved to go. We can convey no adequate idea of what they endured

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before adopting this desperate resolve, but will mention a few facts drawn from well authenticated history, from sworn public documents, and from the evidence taken by the Exodus Investigating Committee. Writing under date of January 10, 1875, General P. H. Sheridan, then in command at New Orleans, says:

Since the year 1866 nearly thirty-five hundred persons, a great majority of whom were colored men, have been killed and wounded in this State. In 1868 the official record shows that eighteen hundred and eighty-four were killed and wounded. From 1868 to the present time no official investigation has been made, and the civil authorities in all but a few cases have been unable to arrest, convict, or punish the perpetrators. Consequently there are no correct records to be consulted for information. There is ample evidence, however, to show that more than twelve hundred persons have been killed and wounded during this time on account of their political sentiments. Frightful massacres have occurred in the parishes of Bossier, Caddo, Catahoula, Saint Bernard, Saint Landry, Grant, and Orleans.

He then proceeds to enumerate the political murders of colored men in the various parishes, and says:

Human life in this State is held so cheaply that when men are killed on account of political opinions, the murderers are regarded rather as heroes than criminals in the localities where they reside.

This brief summary is not by a politician, but by a distinguished soldier, who recounts the events which have occurred within his own military jurisdiction. Volumes of testimony have since been taken confirming in all respects General Sheridan's statement, and giving in detail the facts relating to such murders, and the times and circumstances of their occurrence. The results of the elections which immediately followed them disclose the motives and purposes of their perpetrators. These reports show that in the year 1868 a reign of terror prevailed over almost the entire State. In the parish of Saint Landry there was a massacre of colored people which began on the 28th of September, 1868, and lasted from three to six days, during which between two and three hundred colored men were killed. "Thirteen captives were taken from the jail and shot, and a pile of twenty-five dead bodies were found burned in the woods." The result of this Democratic campaign in the parish was that the registered Republican majority of 1,071 was wholly obliterated, and, at the election which followed a few weeks later not a vote was cast for General Grant, while Seymour and Blair received 4,787.

In the parish of Bossier a similar massacre occurred between the 20th and 30th of September, 1868, which lasted from three to four days, during which two hundred colored people were killed. By the official registry of that year the Republican voters in Bossier Parish numbered 1,938, but at the ensuing election only *one* Republican vote was cast.

In the parish of Caddo during the month of October, 1868, over forty colored people were killed. The result of that massacre was that out of a Republican registered vote of 2,894 only one was cast for General Grant. Similar scenes were enacted throughout the State, varying in extent and atrocity according to the magnitude of the Republican majority to be overcome.

The total summing-up of murders, maimings, and whippings which took place for political reasons in the months of September, October, and November, 1868, as shown by official sources, is over one thousand. The net political results achieved thereby may be succinctly stated as follows: The official registration for that year in twenty-eight parishes contained 47,923 names of Republican voters, but at the Presidential election, held a few weeks after the occurrence of these events, but 5,360 Republican votes were cast, making the net Democratic gain from said transactions 42,563.



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In nine of these parishes where the reign of terror was most prevalent, out of 11,604 registered Republican votes only 19 were cast for General Grant. In seven of said parishes there were 7,253 registered Republican votes but not one was cast at the ensuing election for the Republican ticket.

In the years succeeding 1868, when some restraint was imposed upon political lawlessness and a comparatively peaceful election was held, these same Republican parishes cast from 33,000 to 37,000 Republican votes, thus demonstrating the purpose and the effects of the reign of murder in 1868. In 1876 the spirit of violence and persecution which, in parts of the State, had been partially restrained for a time, broke forth again with renewed fury. It was deemed necessary to carry that State for Tilden and Hendricks, and the policy which had proved so successful in 1868 was again invoked and with like results. On the day of general election in 1876 there were in the State of Louisiana 92,996 registered white voters and 115,310 colored, making a Republican majority of the latter of 22,314. The number of white Republicans was far in excess of the number of colored Democrats. It was, therefore, well known that if a fair election should be held the State would go Republican by from twenty-five to forty thousand majority. The policy adopted this time was to select a few of the largest Republican parishes and by terrorism and violence not only obliterate their Republican majorities, but also intimidate the negroes in the other parishes. The sworn testimony found in our public documents and records shows that the same system of assassinations, whippings, burnings, and other acts of political persecution of colored citizens which had occurred in 1868 was again repeated in 1876 and with like results.

In fifteen parishes where 17,726 Republicans were registered in 1876 only 5,758 votes were cast for Hayes and Wheeler, and in one of them (East Feliciana) where there were 2,127 Republicans registered but 1 Republican vote was cast. By such methods the Republican majority of the State was supposed to have been effectually suppressed and a Democratic victory assured. And because the legally constituted authorities of Louisiana, acting in conformity with law and justice, declined to count some of the parishes thus carried by violence and blood the Democratic party, both North and South, has ever since complained that it was fraudulently deprived of the fruits of victory, and it now proposes to make this grievance the principal plank in the party platform.

On the 6th of December, 1876, President Grant in a message to Congress transmitted the evidence of these horrible crimes against the colored race, committed in the name and in the interest of the Democracy. They are not mere estimates nor conjectures, but the names of the persons murdered, maimed, and whipped, and of the perpetrators of the crimes, the places where they occurred, and the revolting circumstances under which they were committed, are all set forth in detail. This shocking record embraces a period of eight years, from 1868 to 1876, inclusive, and covers ninety-eight pages of fine type, giving an average of about one victim to each line. We have not counted the list, but it is safe to say that it numbers over four thousand.

These crimes did not end in 1876 with the accession of the Democracy to control of the State administration. The witnesses examined by your committee gave numerous instances of like character which occurred in 1878. Madison Parish may serve as an illustration. This parish, which furnished perhaps the largest number of refugees to Kansas, had been exceptionally free from bulldozing in former years. William Murrell,

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one of the witnesses called by the committee, states the reasons for the exodus from that parish as follows:

You have not read of any exodus yet as there will be from that section this summer, and the reason for it is that, for the first time since the war in Madison Parish, last December we had bulldozing there. Armed bodies of men came into the parish—not people who lived in the parish, but men from Ouachita Parish and Richland Parish; and I can name the leader who commanded them. He was a gentleman by the name of Captain Tibbals, of Ouachita Parish, who lives in Monroe, who was noted in the celebrated massacre there in other times. His very name among the colored people is sufficient to intimidate them almost. He came with a crowd of men on the 28th of December into Madison Parish, when all was quiet and peaceable. There was no quarrel, no excitement. We had always elected our tickets in the parish, and we had put Democrats on the ticket in many cases to satisfy them. There were only 238 white voters and about 2,700 colored registered voters.

Mr. Murrell says that David Armstrong, who was president of the third ward Republican club, a man who stood high in the community, and against whom no charge was made except that of being a Republican, made the remark:

"What right have these white men to come here from Morehouse Parish, and Richland Parish, and Franklin Parish to interfere with our election?" And some white men heard of it and got a squad by themselves and said, "We'll go down and give that nigger a whipping." So Sunday night, about ten o'clock, they went to his house to take him out and whip him. They saw him run out the back way and fired on him. One in the crowd cried out, "Don't kill him!" "It is too late, now," they said, "he's dead." The Carroll Conservative, a Democratic newspaper, published the whole thing; but the reason they did it was because we had one of their men on our ticket as judge, and they got sore about it, and we beat him. They killed Armstrong and took him three hundred yards to the river, in a sheet, threw him in the river, and left the sheet in the bushes.

Proceeding with the account of that transaction, Mr. Murrell swears that the colored people had heard that the bulldozers were coming from the surrounding parishes, and that he and others called on some of the leading Democrats in order to prevent it, but all in vain. He says:

We waited on Mr. Holmes, the clerk of the court, and we said to him, "Mr. Holmes, it is not necessary to do any bulldozing here; you have the counting machinery all in your hands, and we would rather be counted out than bulldozed; can't we arrange this thing?" I made a proposition to him and said, "You know I am renominated on the Republican ticket, but I will get out of the way for any moderate Democrat you may name, to save the State and district ticket. We will not vote for your State ticket; you cannot make the colored people vote the State ticket; but if you will let us have our State ticket we will give you the local offices." We offered them the clerk of the court, not the sheriff, and the two representatives. We told him we would not give them the senator, but the district judge and attorney. After this interview Holmes sent us to Dr. Askew, ex-chairman of the Democratic committee, and he said to me, "Now, Murrell, there is no use talking, I advise you to stand from under. When these men get in here we can't control them. We like you well enough and would not like to see you hurt. I will see you to-night at Mr. Holmes's." We had an interview with Mr. Holmes and made this proposition, and Holmes asked me this question: "Murrell, you know damned well the niggers in this parish won't vote the Democratic ticket—there is no use to tell me you will give us the clerk of the court, you know the niggers won't do it. You can't trust the niggers in politics; all your eloquence and all the speeches you can make won't make these niggers vote this ticket or what you suggest, even if we was to accept it. No, by God, Murrell, there's no use talking, we are going to carry this parish; we have found a way to carry it. There ain't no use talking any more about it. No, by God, we are going to carry it. Why," he said, "there is more eloquence in double-barreled shot-guns to convince niggers than there is in forty Ciceros." I said to him, "Well, do you suppose the merchants and planters will back you up," and he said, "O, by God, they have got nothing to do with it. We have charge of it. We three men, the Democratic committee, have full power to work."

The result of this "work" was, as stated by the witness, and not disputed by any one before the committee, that in this parish, containing 2,700 registered Republican voters, and only 238 Democrats, the Demo-



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crats returned a majority of 2,300. The witness, who was a candidate on the Republican ticket, swears that not more than 360 votes were cast. Democratic shot-gun eloquence did its "work," as prophesied by Mr. Askew, ex-chairman of the Democratic committee, but it also served as a wonderful stimulus to migration from Madison Parish.

We cite this case for two reasons: First, because it has been said that the negroes have not emigrated from bulldozed parishes; and, secondly, because it serves as an illustration of the many similar cases which were given to the committee.

We desire also to invite attention to the evidence of Henry Adams, a colored witness from Shreveport, La. Adams is a man of very remarkable energy and native ability. Scores of witnesses were summoned by the majority of the committee from Shreveport, but none of them ventured to question his integrity or truthfulness. Though a common laborer, he has devoted much of his time in traveling through Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, working his way and taking notes of the crimes committed against his race. His notes, written in terse and simple language, embraced the names of six hundred and eighty-three colored men who have been whipped, maimed, or murdered within the last eight years, and his statement of these crimes covers thirty-five pages of closely printed matter in the report. We are sure no one can read it without a conviction of its truthfulness and a feeling of horror at the barbarous details he relates. Adams is the man who has organized a colonization council, composed of laboring colored people, and rigidly excluding politicians, which numbers ninety-eight thousand who have enrolled themselves with a view to emigration from that country as early as possible. He details the character and the purpose of the organization and the efforts it has made to obtain relief and protection for its members. "First," he says, "we appealed to the President of the United States to help us out of our distress, to protect us in our rights and privileges. Next, we appealed to Congress for a territory to which we might go and live with our families. Failing in that," says he, "our other object was to ask for help to ship us all to Liberia, Africa, somewhere where we could live in peace and quiet. If that could not be done," he adds, "*our idea was to appeal to other governments outside of the United States to help us to get away from the United States and go and live there under their flag.*" What a commentary upon our own boasted equality and freedom! Finding no relief in any direction, they finally resolved to emigrate to some of the Northern States. He says they had some hope of securing better treatment at home until 1877, when "we lost all hopes and determined to go anywhere on God's earth, we didn't care where; we said we was going if we had to run away and go to the woods." Perhaps we can best summarize the condition of affairs in Louisiana, and the causes of the exodus from that State, as the negroes themselves regarded them, by quoting a brief extract from the report of the business committee to the colored State convention held in New Orleans on the 21st of April, 1879:

NEW ORLEANS, April 21, 1879.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Your committee on business have the honor to submit this their final report. Discussing the general and widespread alarm among the colored people of Louisiana, including so potent a fear that in many parishes, and in others perhaps largely to follow, there is an exodus of agricultural labor which indicates the prostration and destruction of the productive, and therefore essentially vital, interests of the State. *The Committee find that the primary cause of this lies in the absence of a republican form of government to the people of Louisiana. Crime and lawlessness existing to an extent that laughs at all restraint, and the misgovernment naturally induced from a State adminis-*

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tration itself the product of violence, have created an absorbing and constantly increasing distrust and alarm among our people throughout the State. All rights of freemen denied and all claims to a just recompense for labor rendered or honorable dealings between planter and laborer disallowed, justice a mockery, and the laws a cheat, the very officers of the courts being themselves the mobocrats and violators of law, the only remedy left the colored citizen in many parishes of our State to-day is to emigrate. The fiat to go forth is irresistible. The constantly recurring, nay, ever-present, fear which haunts the minds of these our people in the turbulent parishes of the State is that slavery in the horrible form of peonage is approaching; that the avowed disposition of the men in power to reduce the laborer and his interest to the minimum of advantages as freemen and to absolutely none as citizens has produced so absolute a fear that in many cases it has become a panic. It is flight from present sufferings and from wrongs to come.

Here are the reasons for the exodus as stated by the colored people themselves. In view of the facts which we have stated, and of the terrible history which we cannot here repeat, does any one believe their statement of grievances is overdrawn? Is there any other race of freemen on the face of the earth who would have endured and patiently suffered as they have? Is there any other government among civilized nations which would have permitted such acts to be perpetrated against its citizens?

We will not dwell upon the conditions which have driven these people from Mississippi. It would be but a repetition of the intolerance, persecutions, and violence which have prevailed in Louisiana. The same Democratic "shot-gun eloquence" which was so potent for the conversion of colored Republicans in the one has proven equally powerful in the other. The same "eloquence" which wrested Louisiana from Republicans also converted Mississippi. And in both the same results are visible in the determination of the colored people to get away.

Nearly all the witnesses who were asked as to the causes of the exodus answered that it was because of a feeling of insecurity for life and property; a denial of their political rights as citizens; long-continued persecutions for political reasons; a system of cheating by landlords and storekeepers which rendered it impossible for them to make a living no matter how hard they might work; the inadequacy of school advantages, and a fear that they would be eventually reduced to a system of peonage even worse than slavery itself.

On the latter point they quoted the laws of Mississippi, which authorize a justice's court to inflict heavy fines for the most trivial offenses, and authorize the sheriff to hire the convicts to planters and others for twenty-five cents a day to work out the fine and cost, and which provide that for every day lost from sickness he shall work another to pay for his board while sick. Under these laws they allege that a colored man may be fined \$500 for some trifling misdemeanor, and be compelled to work five or six years to pay the fine; and that it is not uncommon for colored men thus hired out to be worked in a chain-gang upon the plantations under overseers, with whip in hand, precisely as in the days of slavery. And some of the witnesses declared that if an attempt be made to escape they are pursued with blood-hounds, as before the war.

Henry Ruby, a witness summoned by the majority of the committee, swore that in Texas, under a law similar to that in Mississippi, a colored man had been arrested for carrying a "six-shooter" and fined \$65, including costs, and that he had been at work nearly three years to pay it. The laws of that State do not fix the rate for hiring, but "county convicts" may be hired at any price the county judge may determine. He mentioned the case of a colored woman who was hired out for a quarter of a cent per day. Describing this process of hiring, he says:

They call these people county convicts, and if you have got a farm you can go and hire them out of the jail. They have got that system, and the colored men object to



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it. I know some of these men who have State convicts that they hire and they work them under shotguns. A farmer hires so many of the State, and they are under the supervision of a sergeant with a gun and nigger-hounds, to run them with if they get away. They hire them and put them in the same gang with the striped suit on, and, if they want, the guard can bring them down with his shotgun. Then they have these nigger-hounds, and if one of them gets off and they can't find him they take the hounds, and from a shoe, or anything of the kind belonging to the convict, they trail him down.

Q. Are these the same sort of blood-hounds they used to have to run the negroes with?—A. Yes, sir.

These things need no comment. To the negro they are painfully suggestive of slavery. Is it a wonder that he has resolved to go where peonage and blood-hounds are unknown?

Several witnesses were called from Saint Louis and Kansas, who had conversed with thousands of the refugees, and who swore that they all told the same story of injustice, oppression, and wrong. Upon the arrival of the first boat-loads at Saint Louis, in the early spring of 1879, the people of that city were deeply moved by the evident destitution and distress which they presented, and thousands of them were interviewed as to the causes which impelled them to leave their homes at that inclement season of the year. In the presence of these people, and with a full knowledge of their condition and of the causes of their flight, a memorial to Congress was prepared, and signed by a large number of the most prominent and respectable citizens of Saint Louis, embracing such names as Mayor Overholtz (a Democrat), Hon. John F. Dillon, judge of the United States circuit court, ex-United States Senator J. B. Henderson, and nearly a hundred other leading citizens, in which the condition and grievances of the refugees are stated as follows:

The undersigned, your memorialists, respectfully represent that within the last two weeks there have come by steamboats up the Mississippi River, from chiefly the States of Louisiana and Mississippi, and landed at Saint Louis, Mo., a great number of colored citizens of the United States, not less than twenty hundred, and composed of men and women, old and young, and with them many of their children.

This multitude is eager to proceed to Kansas, and without exception, so far as we have learned, refuse all overtures or inducements to return South, even if their passage back is paid for them.

The condition of the great majority is absolute poverty; they are clothed in thin and ragged garments for the most part, and while here have been supported to some extent by public, but mostly by private charity.

The older ones are the former slaves of the South; all now entitled to life and liberty.

The weather from the first advent of these people in this Northern city has been unusually cold, attended with ice and snow, so that their sufferings have been greatly increased, and if there was in their hearts a single kind remembrance of their sunny Southern homes they would naturally give it expression now.

We have taken occasion to examine into the causes they themselves assign for their extraordinary and unexpected transit, and beg leave to submit herewith the written statements of a number of individuals of the refugees, which were taken without any effort to have one thing said more than another, and to express the sense of the witness in his own language as nearly as possible.

The story is about the same in each instance: great privation and want from excessive rent exacted for land, connected with murder of colored neighbors and threats of personal violence to themselves. The tone of each statement is that of suffering and terror. Election days and Christmas, by the concurrent testimony, seem to have been appropriated to killing the smart men, while robbery and personal violence in one form and another seem to have run the year round.

We submit that the great migration of negroes from the South is itself a fact that overbears all contradiction, and proves conclusively that great causes must exist at the South to account for it.

Here they are in multitudes, not men alone, but women and children, old, middle-aged, and young, with common consent leaving their old homes in a natural climate and facing storms and unknown dangers to go to Northern Kansas. Why? Among them all there is little said of hope in the future; it is all of fear in the past. They are not drawn by the attractions of Kansas; they are driven by the terrors of Missis-

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issippi and Louisiana. Whatever becomes of them, they are unanimous in their unalterable determination not to return.

There are others coming. Those who have come and gone on to Kansas must suffer even unto death, we fear; at all events more than any body of people entitled to liberty and law, the possession of property, the right to vote, and the pursuit of happiness, should be compelled to suffer under a free government from terror inspired by robbery, threats, assaults, and murders.

We protest against the dire necessities that have impelled this exodus, and against the violation of common right, natural and constitutional, proven to be of most frequent occurrence in places named; and we ask such action at the hands of our representatives and our government as shall investigate the full extent of the causes leading to this unnatural state of affairs and protect the people from its continuance, and not only protect liberty and life, but enforce law and order.

It is intolerable to believe that with the increased representation of the Southern States in Congress those shall not be allowed freely to cast their ballots upon whose right to vote that representation has been enlarged. We believe no government can prosper that will allow such a state of injustice to the body of its people to exist, any more than society can endure where robbery and murder go unchallenged.

The occasion is, we think, a fit one for us to protest against a state of affairs thus exhibited in those parts of the Union from which these negroes come, which is not only most barbarous toward the negro, but is destructive to the constitutional rights of all citizens of our common country.

Accompanying this memorial are numerous affidavits of the refugees fully confirming all its statements.

As to the future of the exodus we can only say that every witness, whose opinion was asked upon this point, declared that it has only begun, and that what we have seen in the past is nothing compared to what is to come, unless there shall be a radical change on the part of Democrats in the South. They say that the negro has no confidence in the Democratic party, and that if a Democratic President shall be elected there will be a general stampede of the colored race.

There is but one remedy for the exodus—fair treatment of the negro. If the better class of white men at the South would retain the colored laborer they must recognize his manhood and his citizenship, and restrain the vicious and lawless elements in their midst. If Northern Democrats would check the threatened inundation of black labor into their States, they must recognize the facts which have produced the exodus, and unite with us in removing its causes.

We present in conclusion the following brief summary of the results of the investigation:

First. This movement was not instigated, aided, or encouraged by Republican leaders at the North. The only aid they have ever given was purely as a matter of charity, to relieve the distress of the destitute and suffering emigrants who had already come to the North.

Second. Not one dollar has ever been contributed by anybody at the North to bring these people from their homes. On the contrary, the only contributions shown to have been made for such purpose made were by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, a Democratic corporation, which employed agents to work up the emigration from North Carolina, paying \$1 per head therefor.

Third. It is *not* proven that the emigrants are dissatisfied in their new homes and wish to return to the South. On the contrary, a standing offer to pay their expenses back to the South has not induced more than about three hundred out of thirty thousand to return.

Fourth. It is *not* proven that there is no demand for their labor at the North, for nearly all those who have come have found employment, and even in Indiana hundreds of applications for them were presented to the committee.

Fifth. It is *not* proven that there is any sufficient reason for the grave political apprehensions entertained in some quarters, for it was shown

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by Mr. Dukehart, who sold all the tickets to those who came from North Carolina, that not more than *two hundred voters had gone to Indiana*.

Sixth. The exodus movement originated entirely with the colored people themselves, who for many years have been organizing for the purpose of finding relief in that way, and the colored agents of such organizations have traveled all over the South consulting with their race on this subject.

Seventh. A long series of political persecutions, whippings, maimings, and murders committed by Democrats and in the interest of the Democratic party, extending over a period of fifteen years, has finally driven the negro to despair, and compelled him to seek peace and safety by flight.

Eighth. In some States a system of convict hiring is authorized by law, which reinstates the chain-gang, the overseer, and the blood-hound substantially as in the days of slavery.

Ninth. A system of labor and renting has been adopted in some parts of the South which reduces a negro to a condition but little better than that of peonage, and which renders it impossible for him to make a comfortable living, no matter how hard he may work.

Tenth. The only remedy for the exodus is in the hands of Southern Democrats themselves, and if they do not change their treatment of the negro and recognize his rights as a man and a citizen, the movement will go on, greatly to the injury of the labor interests of the South, if not the whole country.

WILLIAM WINDOM.
HENRY W. BLAIR.

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