

# BULLETIN

OF THE

# DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

---

No. 20—JANUARY, 1899.

ISSUED EVERY OTHER MONTH.

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EDITED BY  
CARROLL D. WRIGHT,  
COMMISSIONER.

OREN W. WEAVER,  
CHIEF CLERK.

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WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.  
1899.

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## CONTENTS OF VOLUME IV.

### No. 20.—JANUARY, 1899.

	Page.
Condition of railway labor in Europe, by Walter E. Weyl, Ph. D., of the University of Pennsylvania.....	1-117
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Maine .....	118, 119
New York .....	119-122
Ohio .....	122, 123
Census of Michigan, 1894.....	124-126
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	127-130
Austrian bureau of labor statistics.....	131
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	132-158
Laws of various States relating to labor enacted since January 1, 1896.....	159-171
Recent Government contracts .....	172

### No. 21.—MARCH, 1899.

Pawnbroking in Europe and the United States, by W. R. Patterson, Ph. D., of the State University of Iowa.....	173-310
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Michigan .....	311-314
Second annual report on the building and loan associations of Connecticut.....	315, 316
Eighth annual report on the building and loan associations of New York... ..	317, 318
First annual report on the building and loan associations of Wisconsin.....	319
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	320-327
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	328-359
Recent Government contracts .....	360

### No. 22.—MAY, 1899.

Benefit features of American trade unions, by Edward W. Bemis, Ph. D., of the Kansas State Agricultural College.....	361-400
The Negro in the Black Belt: Some social sketches, by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, Ph. D., of Atlanta University.....	401-417
Wages in Lyons, France, 1870 to 1896.....	418-420
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Indiana .....	421-424
New Hampshire.....	424, 425
New Jersey .....	425-428
Twelfth annual report of the State board of arbitration and conciliation of Massachusetts .....	428
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	429-436
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	437-490
Laws of various States relating to labor enacted since January 1, 1896.....	491-499
Recent Government contracts .....	500

## No. 23.—JULY, 1899.

	Page.
The attitude of women's clubs and associations toward social economics, by Ellen M. Henrotin.....	501-545
The production of paper and pulp in the United States, from January 1 to June 30, 1898.....	546-550
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Kansas.....	551-553
Maine.....	553-555
Missouri.....	555, 556
Pennsylvania.....	557-559
West Virginia.....	559, 560
Census of Massachusetts for 1895.....	561-567
Eleventh annual report of the board of mediation and arbitration of New York.....	568
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	569-574
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	575-615
Laws of various States relating to labor enacted since January 1, 1896.....	616-623
Recent Government contracts.....	624

## No. 24.—SEPTEMBER, 1899.

Statistics of cities.....	625-698
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Connecticut.....	699-701
North Carolina.....	701-703
North Dakota.....	703
Wisconsin.....	703-707
Twelfth report on the annual statistics of manufactures in Massachusetts..	708-712
Twelfth annual report of the board of mediation and arbitration of New York.....	713
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	714-728
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	729-749
Laws of various States relating to labor enacted since January 1, 1896.....	750-763
Recent Government contracts.....	764

## No. 25.—NOVEMBER, 1899.

Statistics of cities—editorial note.....	765-767
Foreign labor laws, by W. F. Willoughby, of the Department of Labor.....	768-856
Digest of recent reports of State bureaus of labor statistics:	
Maryland.....	857, 858
Nebraska.....	858-860
New Jersey.....	860-863
Census of Rhode Island, 1895.....	864-866
Digest of recent foreign statistical publications.....	867-873
Decisions of courts affecting labor.....	874-911
Laws of various States relating to labor enacted since January 1, 1896.....	912-925
Recent Government contracts.....	926

## **THE NEGRO IN THE BLACK BELT: SOME SOCIAL SKETCHES.**

BY W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS, PH. D.

The studies of Negro economic development here presented are based mainly on seminary notes made by members of the senior class of Atlanta University. These young persons, born and bred under the conditions which they describe, have unusual facilities for first-hand knowledge of a difficult and intricate subject. They are also somewhat more experienced in life than corresponding classes in Northern institutions, being in school for the most part through their own exertions and teaching in various communities in vacation time.

Six small groups, containing a total of 920 Negroes, have been studied, all but one of which are situated in Georgia. The groups, however, differ greatly from each other and are designed to represent the development of the Negro from country to city life, from semi-barbarism to a fair degree of culture. The first sketch, for instance, is of 11 families in a small country district of Georgia, and the second of 16 families in a small village of the same State. Here we get a glimpse of the real Negro problem; of the poverty and degradation of the country Negro, which means the mass of Negroes in the United States. Next our attention is called to two towns, both county seats and centers of trade. To such towns both the energetic and listless class of country Negroes are migrating. In these towns are taken up the condition of 83 families, which are mostly, though not entirely, families of the better class and represent the possibilities of the town Negroes. Finally we consider two groups of 85 families, in two small cities, who represent distinctly the better class of Negroes—the class that sends its children to Atlanta, Fisk, and Tuskegee.

Thus it will be seen that there is here no attempt at a complete study of the Negro in the Black Belt, but rather a series of sketches, whose chief value lies in their local color.

### **A COUNTRY DISTRICT IN DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA.**

Seventeen miles east of Atlanta is a small village of less than 500 persons called Doraville; 21 miles southeast is a bit of country without a special name. There are in these two localities between 60 and 75 Negro families, of whom 11 fairly representative ones have been chosen for this study.

In general these Negroes are a degraded set. Except in two families, whisky, tobacco, and snuff are used to excess, even when there is a scarcity of bread. In other respects also the low moral condition of these people is manifest, and in the main there is no attempt at social distinctions among them.

In these 11 families there are 131 individuals, an average of nearly 12 persons to a family. In size the families rank as shown in the following table:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 11 SELECTED FAMILIES OF A COUNTRY DISTRICT OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA, BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Size of family.	Number of families.	Number of individuals.
7 persons .....	1	7
9 persons .....	1	9
10 persons .....	2	20
11 persons .....	1	11
12 persons .....	2	24
13 persons .....	3	39
21 persons .....	1	21
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>11</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Average</b> .....		<b>11.9</b>

The fecundity of this population is astonishing. Here is one family with 19 children—14 girls and 5 boys, ranging in age from 6 to 25 years. Another family has one set of triplets, two sets of twins, and 4 single children. The girls of the present generation, however, are not marrying as early as their mothers did. Once in a while a girl of 12 or 13 runs off and marries, but this does not often happen. Probably the families of the next generation will be smaller.

Four of the 11 heads of families can read and write. Of their children, a majority, possibly two-thirds, can read and write a little. Five of the families own their homes. The farms vary from 1 to 11 acres in extent, and are worth from \$100 to \$400. Two of these farms are heavily mortgaged. Six families rent farms on shares, paying one-half the crop. They clear from \$5 to \$10 in cash at the end of a year's work. They usually own a mule or two and sometimes a cow.

Nearly all the workers are farm hands, women and girls as well as men being employed in the fields. Children as young as 6 are given light tasks, such as dropping seed and bringing water. The families rise early, often before daylight, working until breakfast time and returning again after the meal. One of the men is a stonecutter. He earns \$1.50 a day, owns a neat little home, and lives comfortably. Most of the houses are rudely constructed of logs or boards, with one large and one small room. There is usually no glass in the openings which serve as windows. They are closed by wooden shutters. The large room always contains several beds and homemade furniture, consisting of tables, chairs, and chests. A few homes had three rooms, and one or two families had sewing machines, which, however, were not yet paid for.

These families raise nearly all that they eat—corn, wheat, pork, and molasses. Chickens and eggs are used as currency at the country store to purchase cloth, tobacco, coffee, etc. The character of the home life varies with the different families. The family of 21 is a poverty-stricken, reckless, dirty set. The children are stupid and repulsive, and fight for their food at the table. They are poorly dressed, sickly, and cross. The table dishes stand from one meal to another unwashed, and the house is in perpetual disorder. Now and then the father and mother engage in a hand-to-hand fight.

In some respects this family is exceptionally bad, but several others are nearly as barbarous. A few were much better, and in the stonecutter's five-room house one can find clean, decent family life, with neatly dressed children and many signs of aspiration. The average of the communities, however, was nearer the condition of the family first described than that of the latter one.

In religion the people are sharply divided into Baptists and Methodists, who are in open antagonism, and have separate day schools. The Baptists are the more boisterous and superstitious, and their pastor is ignorant and loud-mouthed, preaching in his shirt sleeves and spitting tobacco juice on either side of the pulpit as he works his audience up to the frenzy of a "shouting." Outside the churches there is a small, women's beneficial society for sickness and death, under the presidency of the stonecutter's wife. Many of the members are in arrears with their payments. There is also a lodge of Odd Fellows. The schools run only 3 months in the year, the wretched schoolhouses and the system of child labor preventing a longer term.

On the whole, a stay in this community has a distinctly depressing effect. There are a few indications of progress, but those of listlessness and stagnation seem more powerful.

#### A SMALL VILLAGE: LITHONIA, DEKALB COUNTY, GA.

Lithonia is 24 miles east of Atlanta, and has a population of perhaps 800. There are in the town two dry goods stores, a drug store, three grocery stores, a barber shop, and a millinery shop conducted by white persons, and a blacksmith shop and a barber shop conducted by Negroes. Nearly all the workingmen of the town are employed in the three rock quarries, which furnish the chief business of the village. The Negro stonecutters here used to earn from \$10 to \$14 a week, but now they receive from \$5 to \$8.50 a week. There are many "scabbers" outside the union who work for still less. They now include the majority of the Negro laborers. Some Negroes are also employed in domestic service and at the large boarding house.

Less than a dozen homes are owned by the Negroes; they rent for the most part small, two-room tenements, at \$4 a month. The whites have a private and a public school, giving them a term of 8 or 9 months. The Negro schools are divided into a Methodist and a Baptist school,

each of which has a term of 3 months. The school buildings are old and dilapidated and scarcely fit to teach in; they will not accommodate nearly all the Negro children of school age.

Sixteen of these Negro families have been especially studied; they represent the average of the village. The families by size are shown in the following table:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 16 SELECTED FAMILIES OF LITHONIA, GA., BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Size of family.	Number of families.	Number of individuals.
2 persons.....	1	2
4 persons.....	1	4
5 persons.....	4	20
6 persons.....	4	24
7 persons.....	3	21
9 persons.....	1	9
10 persons.....	1	10
11 persons.....	1	11
Total.....	16	101
Average.....		6.3

The next table shows the number of persons in these families, by age and sex:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 16 SELECTED FAMILIES OF LITHONIA, GA., BY AGE AND SEX.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 15 years.....	21	21	42
15 to 40 years.....	27	20	47
40 years or over.....	5	7	12
Total.....	53	48	101

Most of these persons were born in the State; 6 were born in Virginia, 6 in Alabama, and 3 in South Carolina. Of those 10 years of age or over, 8 out of 63, or 13 per cent, were illiterate.

Six of these families owned their homes. The following table shows the condition of each family:

CONDITION OF 6 SELECTED FAMILIES OWNING HOMES IN LITHONIA, GA.

Family number.	Size of family.	Rooms in house.	Wage earners in family.	Occupation of wage earners.	Wages per week.	Weeks employed per year.	Yearly wages of wage earners.	Yearly earnings of families.
1.....	5	3	3	Stonecutter... Stonecutter... Hotel waiter... (a) 2.00	\$8.50 5.00 5.00	48 48 52	\$408 240 104	\$752
2.....	11	4	5	1 drayman... 4 farm hands... (b)	(b) (b)	(b) (b)	c 250 d 300	c 550
3.....	6	3	1	Stonecutter... e \$15.00 to 20.00	(b)	(b)	200	200
4.....	6	2	1	Stonecutter... f 5.00	(b)	(b)	200	200
5.....	6	2	1	Stonecutter... f 5.00	(b)	(b)	200	200
6.....	5	4	1	Stonecutter... g 6.50	(b)	48	312	312

a And board.  
b Not reported.

c Approximate.  
d Approximate total for 4 farm hands.

e Per month.  
f Or less.

Besides a house of 3 rooms, family No. 1 owned 6 acres of farm land, and the hotel waiter earned his board in addition to \$2 a week wages. Family No. 2 owned a four-room house with a lot 150 by 35 feet. In this family there were 5 daughters, who helped on the farm, besides the 4 male farm hands. Family No. 3 saved from \$20 to \$30 a year out of earnings of \$200. They owned a three-room house and a lot 150 by 50 feet. Families Nos. 4 and 5 each owned a two-room house with lots, and family No. 6 owned a four-room house with a large lot.

The remaining 10 families investigated at Lithonia rented houses, and the size of such houses and the rent paid are shown in the following table:

RENT PAID BY 10 SELECTED FAMILIES RENTING HOUSES IN LITHONIA, GA., BY SIZE OF HOUSES.

Size of house.	Rent paid per month.	Families renting.
2 rooms .....	\$4.00	5
2 rooms .....	(a)	1
3 rooms .....	4.00	1
3 rooms .....	4.50	1
3 rooms .....	5.00	1
4 rooms .....	5.00	1

a Two bales of cotton per year.

In these 16 families there is an average of  $2\frac{3}{4}$  rooms to a family and a little over 2 persons to a room. The following table presents the 16 families by size of family and classified income:

CLASSIFIED INCOME OF 16 SELECTED FAMILIES OF LITHONIA, GA., BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Income per family.	Families of—								Total families.
	2 persons.	4 persons.	5 persons.	6 persons.	7 persons.	9 persons.	10 persons.	11 persons.	
Under \$200 .....	1		1	1	1		1		5
\$200 to \$300 .....			1	3					4
\$300 to \$400 .....		1	1		1				3
\$400 to \$500 .....					1	1			2
\$500 or over .....			1					1	2
Total .....	1	1	4	4	3	1	1	1	16

The morals of the colored people in the town are decidedly low. They dress and live better than the country Negroes, however, and send their children more regularly to school. The union stonecutters are nearly all members of a local branch of the Odd Fellows. The women have a beneficial society. There are three churches—two Baptist and one Methodist—whose pastors are fairly intelligent. (a)

a The data on which the two studies on conditions in a country district in Dekalb County and in the small village of Lithonia, Ga., are based were furnished by Miss Aletha Howard, a graduate of Atlanta University, who has been the school-teacher in these communities.

## A COUNTY SEAT: COVINGTON, NEWTON COUNTY, GA.

Covington is in the center of one of the smaller counties of the State, and is 41 miles southeast of Atlanta. Being the principal town, it carries on an extensive trade, especially on Saturdays, with the people of Newton, Jasper, and Morgan counties. On such days the main square, formed by the intersection of the two principal streets, is filled with country folk, white and black, in all sorts of conveyances, from the carryall to the ox cart. Here they spend their money, make debts, eat, talk, and are happy. Tasting thus the larger life of the town, large numbers of country people are being constantly tempted to leave their farms and move to town. At the same time Covington boys and girls are pushing on to Macon and Atlanta. This immigration to Covington has been greatly stimulated by the recent extension of the Georgia Railway to the town, so that the village of 1,415 persons in 1880 had 1,823 in 1890, and possibly 3,000 in 1898.

The chief business of the town is retailing supplies for the farmers, selling rope and thread, which is manufactured near by, handling and ginning cotton, handling farm products, etc. There are about 50 retail stores.

Between 250 and 300 Negro families live in the town, representing all conditions. From these have been chosen 50 families for the purposes of this investigation. These families represent the better class of Negroes, and are rather above the average for the town. Their condition shows the general development of the more favorably situated Negroes in a thriving country town. At the same time some notice of general conditions has been taken. The 50 families, according to size, are as follows:

	Families.
2 persons.....	15
3 persons.....	12
4 persons.....	9
5 persons.....	10
7 persons.....	1
9 persons.....	1
10 persons.....	2
Total.....	50

The total number of members of these families was 188, making the average size of the families 3.76 members. In the following table is shown the number of members of these families, by age and sex:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 50 SELECTED FAMILIES OF COVINGTON, GA., BY AGE AND SEX.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 15 years.....	31	40	71
15 to 40 years.....	35	37	72
40 years or over.....	19	26	45
Total.....	85	103	188

The conjugal condition is shown in the following table:

CONJUGAL CONDITION OF PERSONS 15 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER IN 50 SELECTED FAMILIES OF COVINGTON, GA.

Age.	Males.			Females.		
	Single.	Married.	Widowed	Single.	Married.	Widowed
15 to 40 years.....	8	24	3	12	25	.....
40 years or over.....	.....	16	3	4	15	7
Total.....	8	40	6	16	40	7

In the general Negro population of the town the average family is larger than in these families, still it does not approach the average size of the country families. This is partly because only the smaller families move to the city, and partly because of the postponing of marriage.

There is a public school for Negroes open 9 months in the year. It has 3 teachers and an average of 250 scholars. The male principal receives \$50 a month, and his 2 female assistants \$30. The school-house is small and in bad repair, but it is expected a new one will be built sometime. Many girls and some of the boys are sent to Atlanta and Augusta to school. The illiteracy among the 50 families does not exceed 10 per cent.

The number of males 10 years of age or over in each of the occupations represented in the 50 families was as follows: Eight porters, 6 teachers, 6 barbers, 5 carpenters, 4 laborers, 3 gardeners, 3 office boys, 2 mail agents, 2 drivers, 2 draymen, 2 grocers, 2 ministers, 2 waiters, 1 bartender, 1 butcher, 1 farmer, 1 quarryman, 1 contractor, and 1 brick mason, making a total of 53 in the various occupations.

Of the females 10 years of age or over there were 11 teachers, 10 seamstresses, 6 cooks, 3 washerwomen, 1 boarding-house keeper, and 1 housekeeper, a total of 32.

Among the mass of the Negro population the distribution of employments is quite different. There is practically no work for colored girls except domestic service, in which consequently most of them are engaged. The majority of the men are laborers, with a sprinkling of artisans and men in higher walks.

**COMMON AND DOMESTIC LABOR.**—The men are porters in stores, janitors, draymen, drivers, general servants, waiters, common laborers, and farm hands. They usually earn from \$10 to \$12 a month, besides board, and often help in other ways. The women are employed as cooks, nurses, milkmaids, and general servants. They receive from \$4 to \$6 a month for cooking, \$1.50 to \$3 a month for nursing, \$1 a month per cow for milking, etc. The number engaged in domestic service is large, but it is an unpopular calling, and those who can possibly escape from it do so. A great many girls and women do day's work for families, such as sewing, washing, scrubbing, etc. They receive 40 to 50 cents a day for this, and one or two meals. Those who

take in washing receive from 60 cents to \$1 for a family wash. Female farm hands receive from 35 to 50 cents a day.

**THE TRADES.**—Among skilled laborers are found a few Negro painters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, brick masons, plasterers, and carpenters, and one wheelwright. Most of these live in the town, although a few live in the surrounding country. White and Negro mechanics work together without apparent friction, and usually receive the same pay.

**FARMING.**—Four of the town families, besides their regular vocations, conduct farms in the country. Much interest is taken in gardens for family use, and a good deal is sold out of them. Many Negro gardeners earn 50 cents or more a day by taking care of gardens for white families.

**BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.**—Although few Negroes have ventured into the management of businesses, those that have demand especial attention. Negroes are represented in the following enterprises: Two grocery stores, 2 meat markets, 3 restaurants, 1 watchmaker, 5 contractors in building and painting, and 2 furniture makers. Besides these there are the following artisans, who own their establishments: Four barbers, 4 blacksmiths, and 3 shoemakers.

The grocery stores each do a business of from \$20 to \$30 a week. At first Negroes did not patronize them much, but now they are beginning to. They are three or four years old. Of the 4 meat markets in the town 2 are conducted by Negroes, and one of these has been in business 13 years. He is the leading meat dealer in the town, furnishing fully one-half the meat consumed; he has driven many competitors out of business, and owns considerable property in town and country. Three of the four restaurants are conducted by Negroes. The most successful is that of a Negro. He has an ice-cream parlor in addition, with separate eating rooms for the two races. He hires 2 men, and is said to have about \$8,000 in property. The watch repairer is always busy. The contractors do a great deal of work in the town and surrounding country. The 2 furniture makers build nearly all the coffins used by Negroes. The barbers, blacksmiths, and shoemakers seem to be well patronized. There are no white barbers.

**THE PROFESSIONS.**—There are 4 Negro preachers. They average about \$400 a year and house rent. They have fair English training, but none of them is a graduate of a theological school. In character they are far superior to those in the country districts. A few young women and men teach in the town and in the county schools. The latter schools pay from \$15 to \$30 a month and run 5 months or less.

The only clerical work of importance performed by Negroes is in the Railway Mail Service, where 2 Negroes have positions gained by civil-service examination. One has had this work 5 years.

**UNEMPLOYED AND CRIMINAL CLASSES.**—There is a great deal of idleness and loafing, arising partly from the fact that the common work is abundant at certain seasons and scarce at others, and arising, also, in

part from shiftlessness and crime. Many boys and girls become discouraged at the narrow opportunities open to them, and there results emigration, idleness, or vicious habits. On the outskirts of the town are many dives and gambling dens where liquor may be had. Here, especially on Saturday nights, crowds gather and carouse, drunkenness and fighting ensue, and many arrests are made.

The mass of the Negroes are hard-working people with small wages. Many, however, manage to buy homes with their savings. It is interesting to watch the more thrifty. They pay a little each month until a lot is bought; then they build perhaps a single room which stands alone until it is black and weather-beaten; then the frame of a second room is added and pieced up board by board. So the home grows, until after years of toil a house of three or more rooms stands finished. A majority of the better class of Negroes are thus buying property, and a family is considered "low" which is not making some efforts. The yearly income of the mass of Negroes is between \$100 and \$300. The incomes of the 50 selected families may be estimated as follows:

CLASSIFIED INCOME OF 50 SELECTED FAMILIES OF COVINGTON, GA., BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Income per family.	Families of—							Total families.
	2 per-sons.	3 per-sons.	4 per-sons.	5 per-sons.	7 per-sons.	9 per-sons.	10 per-sons.	
Under \$200.....	4	2	1					7
\$200 to \$300.....	6	3						9
\$300 to \$500.....	2	3	6	6				17
\$500 to \$750.....	1	3	1	3		1	1	10
\$750 to \$1,000.....		1	1		1		1	4
\$1,000 or over.....	2			1				3
Total.....	15	12	9	10	1	1	2	50

The average income of a Negro family of the better class is thus seen to be between \$300 and \$500. Three typical families will best illustrate this:

The first of these was a family of 5 persons. The annual income was \$400. The father was a barber, earning \$6 a week. The mother was a seamstress and earned from \$1 to \$4 per week. Two young daughters were in school, and one child was at home. The family owned their home.

The second family was composed of 4 persons and the annual income was \$400. The father, who was a carpenter, worked part of the year at \$10 a week. The mother averaged \$1 a week from outside work, in addition to her work as a housewife. The family owned their home and had 2 children in school.

The third family comprised 9 persons, had an annual income of \$450, and owned their home. The father earned \$3 a week as a gardener, the mother \$2 a week as a washerwoman, one son \$2 a week as a porter, and another son from \$2 to \$3 a week as a gardener. This family also had 2 daughters and 2 sons in school and one child at home.

The majority of these 50 families own their homes, as is shown in the following table:

HOMES OWNED AND RENTED BY 50 SELECTED FAMILIES OF COVINGTON, GA., BY SIZE OF HOMES.

Homes.	Families occupying homes of—					Total families.
	2 rooms.	3 rooms.	4 rooms.	5 rooms.	6 rooms.	
Owned .....	9	8	13	9	2	41
Rented .....		6	1	1	1	9
Total .....	9	14	14	10	3	50

In the community at large the number of home owners is naturally much less; nevertheless the percentage is considerable. The degree of comfort in the homes can be roughly gauged by a comparison of the size of families with the number of rooms occupied, as shown in the following table:

SIZE OF FAMILIES AND OF HOMES, COMPARED, FOR 50 SELECTED FAMILIES OF COVINGTON, GA.

Size of family.	Families occupying homes of—					Total families.	Total individuals.	Total rooms occupied.
	2 rooms.	3 rooms.	4 rooms.	5 rooms.	6 rooms.			
2 persons .....	9	6				15	30	36
3 persons .....		7	5			12	36	41
4 persons .....			9			9	36	36
5 persons .....				10		10	50	50
7 persons .....		1				1	7	3
9 persons .....					1	1	9	6
10 persons .....					2	2	20	12
Total .....	9	14	14	10	3	50	188	184

This table shows that there is an average of nearly 4 rooms to a family and of nearly 1 room to an individual. Among the mass of the population there are still a few one-room cabins. Most of the tenements rented in the town have 2 rooms, and probably the average Negro family occupies 2 or 3 rooms. The houses are all one story, and a common type is that of two rooms united by a hall, and in some cases a small kitchen in the rear. Sometimes a front porch is added.

As a rule the Negroes live in neighborhoods by themselves. In the surrounding country there are many small communities composed entirely of Negroes, which form clans of blood relatives. A few of these settlements are thrifty and neat, but most of them have a dirty, shiftless air, with one-room cabins and numbers of filthy children. Such communities are furnishing immigrants to the town. In Covington there is some tendency among the Negro population to group itself according to social classes. Many streets and neighborhoods are thus respectable and decent, while others are dirty and disreputable.

There are four Negro churches; a beneficial society twenty years old, which owns some property; a lodge of Masons, and one of Odd Fellows. (a)

### A COUNTY SEAT: MARION, PERRY COUNTY, ALA.

Marion is in the midst of the Black Belt of Alabama, in a county where the Negroes outnumber the whites 4 to 1. In the town itself, however, the 2,000 inhabitants are about equally divided. Thirty-three of the perhaps 250 Negro families in the town have been chosen for this study. Here, again, these families represent the better class of the community rather than the average. The number of families of each size was as follows:

	Families.
2 persons .....	1
3 persons .....	5
4 persons .....	6
5 persons .....	11
6 persons .....	1
7 persons .....	3
8 persons .....	2
9 persons .....	4
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>33</b>

The average family is 5.3 persons. The age classification of the 175 members is as follows:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 33 SELECTED FAMILIES OF MARION, ALA., BY AGE AND SEX.

Age.	Males.	Fe- males.	Total.
Under 15 years .....	18	22	40
15 to 40 years .....	46	39	85
40 years or over .....	22	28	50
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>175</b>

Among the persons from 15 to 40 years of age there is a noticeable lack of young people between 20 and 30 years of age, as so many of these have left the town in search of work. As shown in the following table, nearly all of these selected families own their homes:

HOMES OWNED AND RENTED BY 33 SELECTED FAMILIES OF MARION, ALA., BY SIZE OF HOMES.

Homes.	Families occupying homes of—						Total fami- lies.
	2 rooms.	3 rooms.	4 rooms.	5 rooms.	6 rooms.	8 rooms.	
Owned .....	2	15	6	3	1	1	28
Rented .....		2	2	1			5
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>33</b>

a The study of conditions in Covington, Ga., is based on data furnished by Miss T. B. Johnson, who was born in the town and has always lived there.

The size of the homes is compared with the size of the families in the following table:

SIZE OF FAMILIES AND OF HOMES, COMPARED, FOR 33 SELECTED FAMILIES OF MARION, ALA.

Size of family.	Families occupying homes of—						Total families.	Total individuals.	Total rooms occupied.
	2 rooms.	3 rooms.	4 rooms.	5 rooms.	6 rooms.	8 rooms.			
2 persons .....		1					1	2	3
3 persons .....		1	3	1			5	15	20
4 persons .....	2	4					6	24	16
5 persons .....		7	3	1			11	55	38
6 persons .....			1				1	6	4
7 persons .....			1	2			3	21	14
8 persons .....					1	1	2	16	14
9 persons .....		4					4	36	12
Total .....	2	17	8	4	1	1	33	175	121

Among the mass of the Negro population there are a number who own their homes. Most of the Negroes live in two-room houses, and a few in one-room cabins.

The occupations of the males 10 years of age or over and the number in each occupation were as follows for the 33 families: Seven farmers, 6 ministers, 5 barbers, 5 carpenters, 4 bakers, 3 masons, 2 undertakers, 2 merchants, 2 clerks, 2 teachers, 1 mail agent, 1 drayman, 1 Government employee, 1 missionary, 1 plumber, 1 porter, 1 sailor, 1 nurse, and 1 gardener, making a total of 47 in the various occupations.

Of the females 10 years of age or over, there were 7 teachers, 2 nurses, 2 cooks, 1 merchant, 1 seamstress, and 1 washerwoman, a total of 14.

Taking a general survey of employments among Negroes, we find in the better-paid vocations 2 blacksmiths, who average from \$3 to \$5 a day. There were also 2 Negro barber shops, the only ones in town; 2 grocery stores, and a large bakery with a half dozen or more employees and an unusually successful business. One of the black merchants not only owns his store, but rents apartments to a white merchant. There are several carpenters, masons, and other artisans who earn from \$1.50 to \$2.50 a day.

The mass of the colored folks are farmers, laborers, and servants. The farmers as a rule own their own farms, but they are not generally very successful; they do not seem to know how to manage and economize. The young men are mostly porters, waiters, and farm hands. The young women wash, cook, and nurse. They receive very small wages and spend much of their wages for dress.

Compared with the surrounding county, Marion has good school facilities, and consequently a more favorable rate of illiteracy. Of the 135 persons 15 years of age or over in the selected families 34 were illiterate. Only one of these illiterates, however, was under 40 years of age. The public school is poor, but there are 3 missionary schools, one of which, under the American Missionary Association, is very efficient.

There are 4 churches—Methodist, Baptist, and Congregational. The first two originated in slavery times and were for a long time branches of white churches. The Congregational Church is 30 years old, and the more intelligent Negroes attend it; the majority of the selected families are members. There may be distinguished among Marion Negroes three pretty clearly differentiated classes—the class we have studied; the mass of laborers, servants, and farmers, who are usually good-hearted people, but not energetic nor always strictly moral; finally, the slum elements, among whom sexual looseness, drunkenness, and crime are prevalent. It is appalling to see the large number of young people who drift into this lowest class, some of them being intelligent and well reared. Poor home life is responsible for this. (a)

#### A LARGE TOWN: MARIETTA, COBB COUNTY, GA.

Marietta is situated in a county where one-third of the inhabitants are Negroes. It is a place of something over 4,000 inhabitants, lying in north Georgia, 23 miles northwest of Atlanta. It has a Negro population of at least 1,500, of whom 162 persons, or 11 per cent, composing 40 families, have been selected for this study. They represent, on the whole, the better class. Twenty-eight of the 162 persons, or 17 per cent, can not read or write. The public schools of the town are fair. Some scholars have been sent away to school, 5 have been graduated from the normal course of Atlanta University, 2 from the theological department of the Atlanta Baptist Seminary, and 2 from Tuskegee Institute.

Twenty-six of the 40 families own their homes. Most of these homes have 3 rooms, although they vary from 2 to 7 rooms. The lots are usually large enough for front and back yards. The occupations of the heads of the selected families and the number in each occupation are as follows: Four painters, 4 porters, 4 barbers, 3 drivers, 3 carpenters, 3 hostlers, 3 chair factory employees, 3 teachers, 2 grocers, 2 brick masons, 2 shoemakers, 2 blacksmiths, 2 farmers, 1 laborer, 1 gardener, and 1 butler.

Marietta has a number of industries in which Negroes are employed. Two large chair factories employ colored workmen almost exclusively. The work is light and much of it is done in the homes. The hands earn from 50 to 75 cents a day. There are also 2 marble mills, a paper mill, a foundry, and railway shops where numbers of Negroes work. The chief trades of the Negroes are painting, blacksmithing, bricklaying, and carpentry. There are 2 grocery stores. The proprietors own the buildings and hire no clerks. One of the stores is in the center of the town among the white merchants, and has business enough to employ a delivery wagon. This store does a business of from \$40 to \$50 a week. The other store, which is out of the business section of the town, does a

<sup>a</sup> Miss J. G. Childs, a graduate of Atlanta University, furnished data for this study of Marion, Ala. She was born and reared in Marion.

business of from \$20 to \$25 a week. There are a few farmers on the outskirts of the town who may be included in the town population.

The Negro draymen earn from \$4.50 to \$5 a week. The mass of the Negroes are laborers earning from 75 to 80 cents a day, or domestic servants.

The average Negro family can live on from \$2 to \$4 a week. A two-room house rents for from \$3 to \$4 a month; a three-room house for from \$5 to \$6. Soft coal costs \$3 a ton; wood, \$1.75 a cord. Many families raise their own vegetables. Meat sells for from 4 to 10 cents a pound.

There are 3 churches. The Baptist and Methodist ministers are not very well educated, and there is still a demand for noise and demonstration in the services. There is a lodge of Odd Fellows and a beneficial society for women. The latter society owns a large building. In 1897 a weekly newspaper was started; it soon failed, but has recently been revived. The amusements of the people are furnished largely by the churches. The lower elements indulge in dancing and minstrel shows, which are frequently scenes of excess and disorder. (a)

#### A GROUP OF CITY NEGROES IN ATHENS, CLARKE COUNTY, GA.

Athens is a city of 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants, of whom possibly one-third are Negroes. Of these we notice especially 163 persons, or about 4 per cent, composing 45 families. As in the other cases, they form a small selected group of the better class of colored folks. In size these families range as follows:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 45 SELECTED FAMILIES OF ATHENS, GA., BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Size of family.	Number of families.	Number of individuals.
1 person.....	1	1
2 persons.....	13	26
3 persons.....	11	33
4 persons.....	4	16
5 persons.....	13	65
7 persons.....	2	14
8 persons.....	1	8
Total.....	45	163

a W. A. Rogers, a senior in Atlanta University, furnished the notes for this study of conditions in Marietta, Ga.; he is a native of the town.

This shows a small average family of 3.6 persons. In age and sex these persons range thus:

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN 45 SELECTED FAMILIES OF ATHENS, GA., BY AGE AND SEX.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 15 years.....	14	17	31
15 to 40 years.....	40	41	81
40 years or over.....	25	26	51
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>79</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>163</b>

Late marriages and the migration of young people would seem to be the cause of the small families. The conjugal condition may thus be tabulated:

CONJUGAL CONDITION OF PERSONS 15 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER IN 45 SELECTED FAMILIES OF ATHENS, GA.

Age.	Males.			Females.			Total.
	Single.	Married.	Widowed.	Single.	Married.	Widowed.	
15 to 40 years.....	27	13	.....	22	18	1	81
40 years or over.....	.....	23	2	.....	18	8	51
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>132</b>

Of the 132 persons, 10 or 15 per cent are illiterate. There are 4 Negro schools in the city. Two are missionary schools and are not very efficient. The 2 public schools, on the other hand, are unusually well conducted.

As shown in the following table, most of these 45 families own their homes:

HOMES OWNED AND RENTED BY 45 SELECTED FAMILIES OF ATHENS, GA., BY SIZE OF HOMES.

Homes.	Families occupying homes of—							Total families.
	2 rooms.	3 rooms.	4 rooms.	5 rooms.	6 rooms.	7 rooms.	8 rooms or over.	
Owned.....	5	10	5	10	3	2	4	39
Rented.....	1	.....	.....	3	1	.....	1	6
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45</b>

The occupations of this little group are as follows for males 10 years of age or over: Six drivers, 5 teachers, 3 barbers, 3 blacksmiths, 3 in United States mail service, 2 waiters, 2 shoemakers, 2 carpenters, 2 tailors, 2 physicians, 2 ministers, 1 office boy, 1 clerk, 1 bookkeeper, 1 merchant, 1 editor, 1 restaurant keeper, 1 real estate agent, 1 pharmacist, 1 plasterer, 1 cook, 1 expressman, 1 farmer, and 1 plumber, making a total of 45 in the various occupations.

Of females in different occupations, there were 12 teachers, 11 wash-women, 6 seamstresses, 2 boarding-house keepers, and 2 cooks, a total of 33.

The income of these families can be given only approximately; it is about as follows:

CLASSIFIED INCOME OF 45 SELECTED FAMILIES OF ATHENS, GA., BY SIZE OF FAMILIES.

Income per family.	Families of—							Total families.
	1 per-son.	2 per-sons.	3 per-sons.	4 per-sons.	5 per-sons.	7 per-sons.	8 per-sons.	
\$100 to \$150 .....	1							1
\$150 to \$200 .....			2		1			3
\$200 to \$250 .....		4	1		1			6
\$300 to \$500 .....		3	1		2			6
\$500 to \$750 .....		6	2	2	4	2		16
\$750 or over .....			5	2	5		1	13
Total .....	1	13	11	4	13	2	1	45

The great mass of the Athens Negroes is made up largely of immigrants from the country, and a stream is still pouring in. These countrymen replace the town laborers in many employments by accepting lower wages, and thus lowering the standard of life which the town group is striving to raise. Naturally the following more or less well-defined social classes arise from this situation: The small class of the better conditioned Negroes, like those we have studied; the large class of working people and servants; the great number of ignorant countrymen who are common laborers; finally, a substratum of the vicious and criminal. This latter class is small in Athens, and there has not been much serious crime there.

There are 8 Negro churches in the place. Three of the Baptist churches are: First Baptist, founded in 1865, having property valued at \$6,000, and a membership of 425 persons; Ebenezer Baptist, founded in 1885, whose property is valued at \$2,000, and whose membership is 326; Hill's Chapel, founded in 1895, owning property worth \$1,000, and numbering 150 members. Besides these there are 3 Methodist churches, 1 Congregational, and 1 Primitive Baptist. There are a large number of Negro organizations, especially secret and beneficial organizations.<sup>(a)</sup>

From these incomplete sketches few general conclusions can be drawn. Nevertheless, they have a distinct value. First, they are the impressions of lifelong residents, not of hurried investigators; secondly, in the widely separated communities there are certain striking resemblances and lessons. The communities fall easily into three classes: A country district of 131 persons and 11 families; a small village of 101 persons and 16 families; town and city groups of 688 persons and 168 families. In the first class is had a glimpse of the

<sup>a</sup> Notes for this study of conditions in Athens, Ga., were furnished by Miss C. E. Brydie, a native of Athens, and at present a senior in Atlanta University.

deepest of the Negro problems, that of the country Negro, where the mass of the race still lives in ignorance, poverty, and immorality, beyond the reach of schools and other agencies of civilization for the larger part of the time. Small wonder that the Negro is rushing to the city in an aimless attempt to change, at least, if not to better, his condition. Perhaps, on the whole, this is best; certainly it is if this influx can be balanced by a counter migration of the more intelligent and thrifty Negroes to the abandoned farms and plantations. In the second class we catch a glimpse of the small village life with one industry, more material prosperity, but traces of shiftlessness and thrift, immorality and a better family life, curiously intermingled. In both these classes the sketches furnished are, unfortunately, meager. In the third class we have a wider field of observation—4 thriving Southern towns—but here, again, there is a limitation. We have studied that part of the population which has succeeded best in the struggle of town life, and have seen little of the crime, squalor, and idleness of some of the rest of the Negro population. Nevertheless, these 168 families have a peculiar interest. They represent, so far as they go, a solution of the Negro problem, in that they are law-abiding, property-holding people, marrying with forethought, careful of their homes, working hard in new lines of economic endeavor, and educating their children. They are, to be sure, comparatively small in number, and yet in them lies the hope of the American Negro, and—shall we not say—to a great extent, the hope of the Republic.