



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Crisis Vol 13. No. 3

Extracted on Apr-23-2024 03:54:04

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The Crisis

The Augusta Chronicle adds:

The Chronicle agrees with its Albany contemporary in its further comment that inevitably a majority of the Negroes who are leaving the South for the North are going to be disappointed in the change-as many of them have already become-but this is not going to keep them from leaving this section; particularly, when the appeal is made to them that they are in constant danger of mob violence.

The truth of the matter is-these lawless mobs have already cost the South millions of dollars, and it is high time that the best farmers and business men were raising their voices in defense of their own interests. After all, the pocketbook argument may make the strongest appeal.

The Columbia State says:

The matter is one which chiefly concerns the southern farmers. If they stand by and tolerate the driving of the Negroes out of the South by crime and cruelty, their complaints about the loss of their labor will hardly command attention.

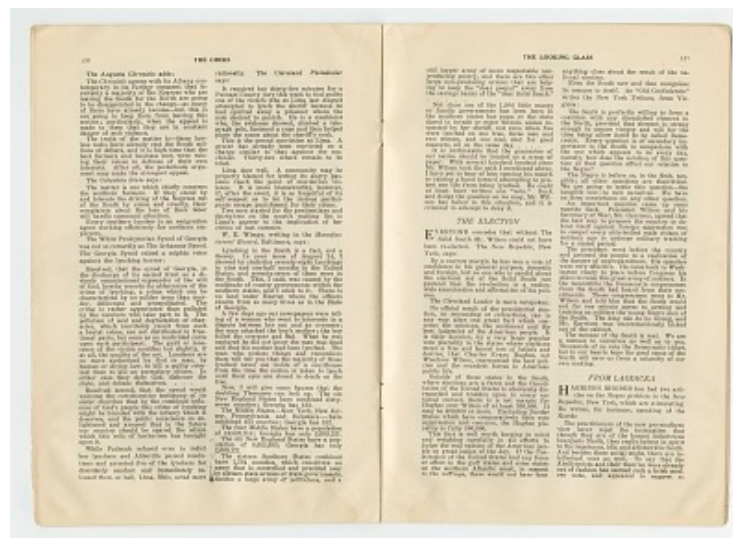
Every southern lyncher is an emigration agent working effectively for northern employers.

The White Presbyterian Synod of Georgia was not so cowardly as The Arkansas Synod. The Georgia Synod raised a mighty voice against the lynching horror:

Resolved, that the synod of Georgia, in the discharge of its sacred trust as a divinely commissioned expounder of the will of God, hereby records its abhorrence of the crime of lynching, a crime which can be characterized by no milder a term than murder, deliberate and premeditated. The crime is rather aggravated than palliated by the numbers who take part in it. The pollution of soul and degradation of character, which inevitably result from such a brutal crime, are not distributed in fractional parts, but come as an undivided curse upon each participant. The guilt or innocence of the victim modifies but slightly, if at all, the quality of the act. Lynchers are no more authorized by God or man, by human or divine law, to kill a guilty criminal than to kill an exemplary citizen. In either case they defy God, dishonor the state, and debase themselves....

Resolved second, that the synod would welcome the corroborative testimony of its sister churches that by the combined influence of God's people this crime of lynching might be branded with the infamy which it deserves, and the public conscience so enlightened and aroused that in the future our country should be spared the odium which this relic of barbarism has brought upon it.

While Paducah refused even to indict her lynchers and Abbeville passed resolutions and arrested five of the lynchers for disorderly conduct and immediately released them on bail, Lima, Ohio, acted more rationally.



The Cleveland Plaindealer says:

It required but thirty-five minutes for a Putnam County jury this week to find guilty one of the rioters who at Lima last August attempted to lynch the sheriff because he had spirited away a prisoner whom the mob desired to punish. He is a machinist who, the evidence showed, climbed a telegraph pole, fastened a rope and then helped place the noose around the sheriff's neck.

This is the second conviction at Lima. A grocer has already been convicted on a charge similar to that against the machinist. Thirty-two remain to be tried.

Lima does well. A community may be properly blamed for letting its angry passions reach the point of murderous violence. It is more blameworthy, however, if, after the event, it is so forgetful of its self-respect as to let the riotous participants escape punishment for their crime.

Two men started for the penitentiary and thirty-two on the court's waiting list is Lima's answer to the implication of her critics last summer.

W. E. Wimpy, writing in the Manufacturers' Record, Baltimore, says:

Lynching in the South is a fact, not a theory. In your issue of August 24, I showed by statistics seventy-eight lynchings in nine and one-half months in the United States, and seventy-seven of them were in the South. This, I said, was caused by the multitude of county governments within the southern states, and I stick to it. There is no land under Heaven where the officers swarm from so many hives as in the State of Georgia.

A few days ago our newspapers were telling of a woman who went to intercede in a dispute between her son and an overseer; the man attacked the boy's mother; the boy felled the overseer and fled. When he was captured he did not know the man was dead and that his mother had been lynched. The man who notices things and remembers them will tell you that the majority of those lynched never see inside of a courthouse from the time the notion is taken to lynch until their eyes are closed in death on the tree.

Now, I will give some figures that the doubting Thomases can look up. The six New England States have combined sixty-seven counties; Georgia has 152.

The Middle States-New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware-have combined 153 counties; Georgia has 152.

The four Middle States have a population of 19,521,214; Georgia has only 2,609,121.

The six New England States have a population of 6,652,638; Georgia has only 2,609,121.

The sixteen Southern States combined have 1,504 counties, which

constitute an army that is controlled and presided over by sixteen state armies or state governments, besides a large army of politicians, and a

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still larger army of more respectable non-producing gentry, and there are two other large non-producing armies that are helping to keep the "dear peepul" away from the savings banks of the "dear Solid South."

Not since one of the 1,504 little county or family governments has been born in the southern states has papa or the state dared to invade or enter therein unless requested by her sheriff, not even when five were lynched on one tree, three men and two women, and one man shot for good measure, all on the same day.....

It is unthinkable that the guarantee of our nation should be treated as a scrap of paper. With several hundred lynched since Mr. Wilson took the oath I mentioned above, I have yet to hear of him opening his mouth or raising a hand toward attempting to protect one life from being lynched. He could at least have written one "note." Duck and dodge the question as we may, Mr. Wilson has failed in this situation, and it is criminal to attempt to deny it.

The Election

Everyone concedes that without The Solid South Mr. Wilson could not have been re-elected. The New Republic, New York, says:

By a narrow margin he has won a vote of confidence in his general purpose, domestic and foreign, but no one who is candid about the electoral aid of the Solid South can pretend that the re-election is a nation-wide examination and affirmation of his policies.

The Cleveland Leader is more outspoken:

No official result of the presidential election, no recounting or corrections, can in any way alter one great fact, which concerns the opinions, the sentiment and the best judgment of the American people. It is their decision, by a very large popular vote plurality in the states where elections mean a free and honest test of beliefs and desires, that Charles Evans Hughes, not Woodrow Wilson, represented the best policies and the soundest forces in American public life.

Outside of those states in the South, where elections are a farce and the Constitution of the United States is absolutely disregarded and trodden upon in every national contest, there is a net margin for Hughes over Wilson of at least 300,000. It may be 400,000 or more. Excluding Border States which have comparatively little vote suppression and coercion, the Hughes plurality is fully 500,000.

The fact is well worth keeping in mind and weighing carefully in all efforts to judge the real opinion of the American people on great issues of the day. If the Constitution of the United States had any force or effect in the gulf states and some states on the southern Atlantic coast, in respect to the suffrage, there would not have been anything close about the result of the national election.

Even the South now and then recognizes its menace to itself. An "Old Confederate" writes in the New York Tribune, from Virginia:

The South is perfectly willing to form a coalition with any dissatisfied element in the North, provided that element is strong enough to assure victory and will for the time being allow itself to be called Democratic. Every question is of secondary importance to the South in comparison with the one which appeals to us every day, namely, how does the solution of this question or that question affect our relation to the Negro?

The Negro is before us, in the flesh, tangible; all other questions are theoretical. We are going to settle this question-the tangible one-to suit ourselves. We have no firm conviction on any other question.

An important question came up some months back. President Wilson and his Secretary of War, Mr. Garrison, agreed that the best way to prepare the country to defend itself against foreign aggression was to compel every able-bodied male citizen of military age to undergo military training for a stated period.

The president went before the country and aroused the people to a realization of the danger of unpreparedness. His speeches were very effective. He came back to Washington ready to place before Congress his plans to raise this great army of soldiers. In the meanwhile the Democratic congressmen from the South had heard from their constituents. These congressmen went to Mr. Wilson and told him that the South would not for one minute agree to arming and training as soldiers the young Negro men of the South. The king can do no wrong, and Mr. Garrison was unceremoniously kicked out of the cabinet.

The menace of the South is real. We are a menace to ourselves as well as to you. Thousands of us vote the Democratic ticket, but in our hearts hope the good sense of the North will save us from a calamity of our own making.

From Laodicea

Harrison Rhodes has had two articles on the Negro problem in the New Republic, New York, which are stimulating. He writes, for instance, speaking of the North:

The practitioners of the new pro-southern view never repel the insinuation that though they are of the honest industrious bourgeois North, they really belong in spirit to the impetuous, idle, and aristocratic South. And besides these social snobs, there are intellectual ones as well. To say that the Abolitionists and their theories were already out of fashion has seemed such a brisk modern note, and appeared to suggest so

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