

## **The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia: A Social Study**

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

For many reasons it would appear that the time is ripe for undertaking a thorough study of the economic condition of the American Negro. Under the direction of the United States Commissioner of Labor the present study was made during July and August, 1897, as the first of a series of investigations of small, well-defined groups of Negroes in various parts of the country.

In this work there has been but the one object of ascertaining, with as near an approach to scientific accuracy as possible, the real condition of the Negro.

#### PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY.

Prince Edward County is a small irregular quadrangle of about 300 square miles, situated in the middle country of Virginia, between the Piedmont region and tide water, about 57 miles southwest of Richmond, and midway between Petersburg and Lynchburg. This county is thus near the geographical center of the State, and is also in the center of a district that produces seven-eighths of the tobacco crop of Virginia. The county seat is Farmville, a market town of 2,500 inhabitants, situated on the upper waters of the Appomattox.

This county has had an interesting history as regards its population. A century ago it had a population of 8,000, evenly divided between whites and blacks; to-day it has a population of over 14,000, but the increase is almost entirely among the blacks, the number of whites

still remaining under 5,000. The following table shows the white and black population of the county at each census from 1790 to 1890:

POPULATION OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, 1790 TO 1890.

Census year. Whites. Slaves. Free Negroes. Total Negroes. Total population.

|      |       |       |       |       |        |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 1790 | 4,082 | 3,986 | 32    | 4,018 | 8,100  |
| 1800 | 4,978 | 5,921 | 63    | 5,984 | 10,962 |
| 1810 | 5,264 | 6,996 | 149   | 7,145 | 12,409 |
| 1820 | 4,627 | 7,616 | 334   | 7,950 | 12,577 |
| 1830 | 5,039 | 8,593 | 475   | 9,068 | 14,107 |
| 1840 | 4,923 | 8,576 | 570   | 9,146 | 14,069 |
| 1850 | 4,177 | 7,192 | 488   | 7,680 | 11,857 |
| 1860 | 4,037 | 7,341 | 466   | 7,807 | 11,844 |
| 1870 | 4,106 |       | 7,898 | 7,898 | 12,004 |
| 1880 | 4,754 |       | 9,914 | 9,914 | 14,668 |
| 1890 | 4,770 |       | 9,924 | 9,924 | 14,694 |

Of the total population of the county, less than one-third live in towns of 25 or more inhabitants, leaving the great mass of the people thoroughly rural and agricultural. Before the late war more than 75 per cent of the farms were of 100 acres or over, and were worked by gangs of from 10 to 50 slaves. <sup>1</sup> By 1870 these farms had become so broken up that nearly 40 per cent of them were less than 50 acres in size. Since then something of a reaction has taken place and more waste land brought under cultivation, so that in 1890 31 per cent of the farms were less than 50 acres in size.

The following table shows the number and per cent of farms in Prince Edward County, according to size, at each census from 1860 to 1890:

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF FARMS IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, BY SIZE, 1860 TO 1890.

| Size of farms.                | 1860.   |           | 1870.   |           | 1880.   |           | 1890.   |           |
|-------------------------------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
|                               | Number. | Per cent. |
| Under 10 acres.....           |         |           | 23      | 3.75      | 34      | 3.23      | 65      | 5.93      |
| 10 or under 20 acres.....     | 6       | 1.23      | 49      | 7.99      | 152     | 14.44     | 118     | 10.77     |
| 20 or under 50 acres.....     | 45      | 9.24      | 164     | 26.75     | 161     | 15.20     | 159     | 14.51     |
| 50 or under 100 acres.....    | 70      | 14.37     | 120     | 19.58     | 147     | 13.96     | 171     | 15.60     |
| 100 or under 500 acres.....   | 318     | 65.30     | 232     | 37.85     | 472     | 44.82     | 505     | 46.08     |
| 500 or under 1,000 acres..... | 46      | 9.45      | 23      | 3.75      | 73      | 6.93      | 67      | 6.11      |
| 1,000 acres or over.....      | 2       | .41       | 2       | .33       | 14      | 1.33      | 11      | 1.00      |
| Total.....                    | 487     | 100.00    | 613     | 100.00    | 1,033   | 100.00    | 1,096   | 100.00    |

At the same time tenants and métayers, who had a large part of the land in cultivation in 1870, have decreased from 1880 to 1890, so that over 70 per cent of the farms are now cultivated by their owners.

The following table, compiled from the United States census returns (report on agriculture), shows for the county the number of farms of

various sizes cultivated by owners, rented for money, and rented on shares in 1880 and 1890:

TENURE OF FARMS IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, 1880 AND 1890.

| Size of farms.                | Cultivated by owners. |       | Rented for money. |       | Rented on shares. |       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
|                               | 1880.                 | 1890. | 1880.             | 1890. | 1880.             | 1890. |
| Under 10 acres.....           | 15                    | 35    | 3                 | 11    | 16                | 19    |
| 10 or under 20 acres.....     | 47                    | 76    | 40                | 12    | 65                | 30    |
| 20 or under 50 acres.....     | 68                    | 103   | 33                | 19    | 60                | 37    |
| 50 or under 100 acres.....    | 80                    | 127   | 29                | 30    | 38                | 14    |
| 100 or under 500 acres.....   | 332                   | 366   | 70                | 68    | 70                | 71    |
| 500 or under 1,000 acres..... | 56                    | 60    | 8                 | 1     | 9                 | 6     |
| 1,000 acres or over.....      | 9                     | 8     | 4                 | 1     | 1                 | 2     |
| Total.....                    | 607                   | 775   | 187               | 142   | 259               | 179   |
| Per cent.....                 | 57.64                 | 70.71 | 17.76             | 12.96 | 24.60             | 16.33 |

Less than 2 per cent of these farms are encumbered, but the liens on crops amount to a considerable per cent each year.

Agriculture is the chief occupation of the inhabitants of the county, tobacco being the leading product. Corn, wheat, oats, and potatoes are also raised, together with dairy products and poultry. The following table shows the principal products of the county at each census, 1850 to 1890:

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, 1850 TO 1890.

| Products.      | 1850.            | 1860.     | 1870.   | 1880.     | 1890.     |
|----------------|------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Tobacco        | pounds 2,571,850 | 4,231,797 | 960,700 | 2,462,326 | 1,633,830 |
| Corn           | bushels 214,350  | 233,833   | 87,440  | 192,462   | 106,011   |
| Wheat          | bushels 75,762   | 79,521    | 43,820  | 45,838    | 58,481    |
| Oats           | bushels 87,229   | 122,126   | 67,445  | 59,870    | 43,050    |
| Hay            | tons 487         | 151       | 268     | 1,100     | 2,513     |
| Irish potatoes | bushels 7,700    | 7,700     | 7,544   | 5,319     | 12,737    |
| Sweet potatoes | bushels 12,454   | 8,772     | 4,484   | 6,323     | 12,871    |
| Butter         | pounds 47,932    | 67,288    | 51,791  | 56,350    | 133,511   |

In addition to this agricultural exhibit there is a little manufacturing <sup>2</sup>, and there are three lines of railway crossing the county and bringing it into touch with the markets. <sup>3</sup>

The total assessed valuation of real estate and personal property in the county was \$2,397,007 in 1890, and on this was raised by taxation the sum of \$24,281, making a tax rate of \$10.13 per \$1,000 of valuation. The money raised was distributed as follows: To the State, \$7,192; to the county, \$7,191; to the towns, \$5,104; to the schools, \$4,794. <sup>4</sup>

Turning to the Negroes of the county, we find that in 1895 the 9,924 Negroes therein owned 17,555 acres of land, which, together with buildings, was assessed at \$132,189. The whites of the county, in the same year, owned 202,962 acres, and the assessed value of their lands and buildings was \$1,064,180.

The following table, compiled from records in the county clerk's office at Farmville, shows the number of acres of land owned by Negroes in Prince Edward County and the assessed value of their land and buildings for each year from 1891 to 1895:

ACRES OF LAND OWNED BY NEGROES IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY AND ASSESSED VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS, 1891 TO 1895.

Year. Acres of land owned. Assessed value of land and buildings.

|      |        |             |
|------|--------|-------------|
| 1891 | 12,215 | \$83,212.48 |
| 1892 | 13,207 | 89,787.75   |
| 1893 | 14,754 | 97,341.53   |
| 1894 | 16,467 | 105,024.48  |
| 1895 | 17,555 | 132,188.66  |

Situated in the geographic center of an historic slave State, near the economic center of its greatest industry, tobacco culture, and also in the black belt of the State, i. e., in the region where a decided majority of the inhabitants are of Negro blood, Prince Edward County is peculiarly suited to an investigation into Negro development. The few available statistics serve to indicate how vast a revolution this region has passed through during the last century. They show the rise and fall of the plantation-slave system; the physical upheaval of war in a region where the last acts of the great civil war took place <sup>5</sup>, and the moral and economic revolution of emancipation in a county where the slave property was worth at least \$2,500,000. They indicate, finally, the ensuing economic revolution brought about by impoverished lands, changes in the commercial demand for tobacco and the methods of handling it, the competition of the West in cereals and meat, the growing importance of manufactures which call workers to cities, and the social weight of a mass of ignorant freedmen.

The present study does not, however, concern itself with the whole county, but merely with the condition of the Negroes in its metropolis and county seat, Farmville, where its social, political, and industrial life centers, where its agricultural products are marketed, and where its development is best epitomized and expressed.

#### FARMVILLE.

Farmville is in the extreme northern part of Prince Edward County. It is thoroughly Virginian in character -easy-going, gossipy, and conservative,

with respect for family traditions and landed property. It would hardly be called bustling, and yet it is a busy market town, with a long, low main street full of general stores, and branching streets with tobacco warehouses and tobacco factories, churches, and substantial dwellings. Of public buildings there is an opera house, a normal school for white girls, an armory, a court-house and jail, a bank, and a depot. The air is good, and there is an abundance of lithia and sulphur waters, which now and then attract visitors.

Farmville is the trading center of six counties. Here a large proportion of the tobacco of these counties is marketed, and some of it manufactured into strips; here are a half-dozen or more commission houses which deal in all sorts of agricultural products; and here, too, is the center for distributing agricultural implements, clothing, groceries, and household wares. On Saturday, the regular market day, the town population swells to nearly twice its normal size from the influx of country people -mostly Negroes -some in carriages, wagons, and ox carts, and some on foot, and a large amount of trading is done.

Naturally such a town in the midst of a large farming district has a great attraction for young countrymen, on account of its larger life and the prospect of better wages in its manufacturing and trading establishments. A steady influx of immigrants thus adds annually to the population of the town. At the same time Farmville boys and girls are attracted by the large city life of Richmond, Norfolk, Baltimore, and New York. In this manner Farmville acts as a sort of clearing house, taking the raw country lad from the farm to train in industrial life, and sending north and east more or less well-equipped recruits for metropolitan life. This gives the town an atmosphere of change and unrest rather unusual in so small a place, and at the same time often acts as a check to schemes of permanent prosperity.

The population of Farmville has grown steadily since 1850. Since 1890, however, the Negro population appears to have fallen off -a fact due doubtless to the large emigration to Northern cities. The following table, compiled from files in the Census Office and from schedules, shows the white and black population of Farmville for each census year from 1850 to 1890 and the black population in 1897:

#### POPULATION OF FARMVILLE, 1850 TO 1897.

| Year. | Whites.        | Negroes.           | Total. |
|-------|----------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1850  | 599            | 848                | 1,447  |
| 1860  | 683            | 853                | 1,536  |
| 1870  | 598            | 945                | 1,543  |
| 1880  | 872            | 1,186              | 2,058  |
| 1890  | 961            | 1,443              | 2,404  |
| 1897  | 6 <sup>7</sup> | 1,350 <sup>8</sup> |        |

In 1880 the population of Farmville district, including Farmville town, was 3,310, of whom 1,120 were whites and 2,190 blacks; and in 1890 the population of the district was 3,684, of whom 1,246 were whites and 2,438 blacks.

The chief industries of the town are: The selling of tobacco and its storage in warehouses, which is done by stock companies composed of Negro as well as white stockholders; the manufacture of tobacco into strips, carried on by 7 white firms in 16 tobacco factories; woodworking by the Farmville Manufacturing Company; coopering by a firm; fruit canning by the South Side Canning Company; grinding of feed by the Farmville mills, and the running of 57 retail stores, etc., divided as follows: Eight clothing stores, 12 grocery stores, 4 general stores, 4 commission merchants with stocks of harness and hardware, 4 drug stores, 3 dry-goods stores, 3 meat stores, 3 millinery stores, 2 restaurants, 2 book and stationery stores, 3 hardware stores, 2 furniture and undertaking stores, 1 jewelry store, 1 confectionery and toy store, 1 stove and tinware store, 1 wagon store, 1 steam laundry, and 2 saloons. <sup>9</sup>

The total valuation of the town for 1890 was \$661,230 -real estate \$541,230, personal property \$120,000 -on which a total tax of \$9,855 was raised, and distributed as follows: To the State \$1,983, to the county \$1,983, to the town \$3,906, to the State school fund \$661, and to the county and town school fund \$1,322. In 1880 the town had a debt of \$11,200, and in 1890 this had increased to \$65,000. The following table gives the assessed valuation of real estate and its division between whites and blacks in Farmville, as shown in the records at the county clerk's office, for the years 1891 to 1895:

ASSESSED VALUATION OF FARMVILLE REAL ESTATE, 1891 TO 1895.

| Year.     | Real estate owned by— |                       |          |                       | Total.    |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
|           | Whites.               |                       | Negroes. |                       | Amount.   | Per cent of increase. |
|           | Amount.               | Per cent of increase. | Amount.  | Per cent of increase. |           |                       |
| 1891..... | \$523,355             | .....                 | \$42,834 | .....                 | \$566,189 | .....                 |
| 1892..... | 530,685               | 1.40                  | 51,865   | 21.08                 | 582,550   | 2.89                  |
| 1893..... | 543,610               | 2.44                  | 52,765   | 1.74                  | 596,375   | 2.37                  |
| 1894..... | 545,130               | .28                   | 53,340   | 1.09                  | 598,470   | .35                   |
| 1895..... | 525,205               | a 3.66                | 51,240   | a 3.94                | 576,445   | a 3.68                |

a Decrease.

About three-fifths of the inhabitants of Farmville, August 1, 1897, were of Negro descent, and it is with this part of the population that this study has to do. The investigator spent the months of July and August in the town; he lived with the colored people, joined in their

- 1. Number of persons in the family?
- 2. Relationship of this person to head of family?
- 3. Sex?
- 4. Age at nearest birthday?
- 5. Conjugal condition?
- 6. Place of birth?
- 7. Length of residence in Farmville?
- 8. Length of residence in this house?
- 9. Able to read?
- 10. Able to write?
- 11. Months in school during last year?
- 12. Usual occupations?
- 13. Usual wages per day, week, or month?
- 14. Weeks unemployed during year?
- 15. Mother of how many children (born living)?
- 16. Number of children now living?
- 17. Present whereabouts of such children?
- 18. Does the family own this home?
- 19. Do they own any land or houses?
- 20. Rent paid here per month?
- 21. Church attendance?

There was usually no difficulty experienced in getting the Negroes to answer these questions, so far as they could. The greatest uncertainty in the accuracy of answers was in connection with the first and fourth questions; the first on account of members of the family temporarily absent, and the fourth because in so many cases the age is unknown. Answers as to wages were of course more or less indefinite, although fairly good returns were obtained. The fifteenth question could be answered only when the mother herself was present, and then not always with sufficient accuracy. Only a few answers to this query were recorded. On the whole, the answers seem to approach the truth nearly enough to be of some considerable scientific value, although a large possible margin of error is admitted.

#### AGE, SEX, AND BIRTHPLACE OF NEGRO POPULATION.

The total number of Negroes in Farmville who reported as to age and sex was 1,225. If 250, estimated as not reporting, be added to this number, the total in and about Farmville is found to be about 1,475. Subtracting from this total 125 who lived outside the corporation, we find that the Negro population of the corporation of Farmville was approximately 1,350 in 1897. As the corporation line, however, cuts off somewhat arbitrarily a considerable number of Negroes who really share the group life of Farmville, they have been included in the total, except when otherwise stated. Twenty-five people whose residence in Farmville was for such indefinite periods as to make their citizenship questionable have been omitted; they have families here, but themselves work mostly in the North. About 75 servants, mostly young women living in white families as servants and having no

other town homes were not interrogated at all, and consequently are not accounted for in these returns. Their number and the number of those otherwise omitted are estimated and not actually counted.

Taking the Negroes of the Farmville group as shown in the table following, we find that there are 598 males and 627 females, or the proportion of 1,048 females to every 1,000 males <sup>11</sup> This is much above the general proportion for the United States (952.8 females to every 1,000 males), and even above the proportion in the North Atlantic States. This excess of females indicates a large emigration of males. The following table shows, by age periods, the number of Negroes of each sex from whom reports were obtained:

NUMBER OF NEGROES IN FARMVILLE FROM WHOM REPORTS WERE OBTAINED, BY AGE PERIODS AND SEX, 1897.

| Age periods.        | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|---------------------|--------|----------|--------|
| Under 1 year        | 12     | 12       | 24     |
| 1 to 9 years        | 127    | 150      | 277    |
| 10 to 19 years      | 182    | 147      | 329    |
| 20 to 29 years      | 87     | 101      | 188    |
| 30 to 39 years      | 53     | 67       | 120    |
| 40 to 49 years      | 47     | 55       | 102    |
| 50 to 59 years      | 44     | 52       | 96     |
| 60 to 69 years      | 23     | 24       | 47     |
| 70 to 79 years      | 14     | 15       | 29     |
| 80 to 89 years      | 3      | 3        | 6      |
| 90 to 99 years      | 1      |          | 1      |
| 100 years or over 1 |        |          | 1      |
| Age unknown         | 4      | 1        | 5      |
| Total               | 598    | 627      | 1,225  |

Considering the percentage in different age periods, it is interesting to bring the Negro population of Farmville into comparison with the colored population of the United States, the whole population of the United States, and the populations of various foreign countries. This comparison is made in the following table.

PER CENT IN DIFFERENT AGE PERIODS OF NEGROES IN FARMVILLE AND OF TOTAL POPULATION IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

[The per cents for Farmville are computed from schedules; the others are taken from the United States census of 1890 and Mayo-Smith's Statistics and Sociology.]

| Age periods.           | Negroes of Farmville. | Colored population of the United States. (a) | Total population of the United States. | Population of— |          |         |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|----------------|----------|---------|
|                        |                       |  |  | Germany.       | Ireland. | France. |
| Under 10 years .....   | 24.57                 | 28.22  | 24.28                                  | 24.2           | 20.8     | 17.5    |
| 10 to 19 years .....   | 26.86                 | 25.18  | 21.70                                  | 20.7           | 23.4     | 17.4    |
| 20 to 29 years .....   | 15.35                 | 17.40  | 18.25                                  | 18.2           | 16.2     | 16.3    |
| 30 to 39 years .....   | 9.79                  | 11.26  | 13.48                                  | 12.7           | 10.8     | 13.8    |
| 40 to 49 years .....   | 8.32                  | 7.89   | 9.45                                   | 10.4           | 9.8      | 12.3    |
| 50 to 59 years .....   | 7.84                  | 4.92   | 6.38                                   | 7.8            | 8.5      | 10.1    |
| 60 to 69 years .....   | 3.84                  | 2.88   | 3.94                                   | 5.2            | 6.0      | 7.6     |
| 70 years or over ..... | 3.43                  | 2.25   | 2.52                                   | 2.8            | 4.5      | 5.0     |
| Total .....            | 100.00                | 100.00                                       | 100.00                                 | 100.0          | 100.0    | 100.0   |

a Persons of Negro descent, Chinese, Japanese, and civilized Indians.

Here again we have evidence of the emigration of persons in the twenties and thirties, leaving an excess of children and old people. This excess is not neutralized by the immigration from the country districts, because that immigration is apt to be of whole families—young, middle-aged, and old—rather than of young men and young women alone. The proportion of children under 15 is also increased by the habit which married couples and widowed persons have of going to cities to work and leaving their children with grandparents. This also accounts for the small proportion of colored children in a city like Philadelphia.

With regard to persons 35 or 40 years of age or over, there is undoubtedly considerable error in the age returns. They do not know their ages, and have no written record. In such cases the investigator generally endeavored, by careful questioning, to fix some date, like that of Lee's surrender, and find a coinciding event like marriage or the "half-task" child-labor period of life, to correspond.

There are 263 males of voting age and 512 children of the legal school age (5 to 20), or 367 of the usual school age (5 to 15). From the statistics of birthplace it is found that of the 1,225 Farmville Negroes 531, or 43 per cent, were born in the town; 750, or 61 per cent, in Prince Edward County, and 1,181, or 96 per cent, in the State. Of those born outside the State, 1 was born in Alabama, 4 in Georgia, 1 in Kansas, 2 in Massachusetts, 4 in New York, 4 in North Carolina, 1 in Tennessee, and 5 in West Virginia. Two came from the West Indies, and the birthplaces of 20 are unknown. The town population is thus shown to be a local concentration from neighboring country districts.

Of the 262 families of Negroes in the town, 202 reported as to length of residence there. Eight had resided there less than a year, 17 from one to five years, 35 from five to ten years, 45 from ten to twenty years, 61 from twenty to thirty-five years, and 36 thirty-five or more years. In other words, about one-half the population has moved into the town since 1880.

CONJUGAL CONDITION, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS.

In the table following, relating to the conjugal condition of the Negroes of this community, it is found that of the 351 males over 15 years of age who returned answers 147, or 41.9 per cent, were single; 178, or 50.7 per cent, were married, and 14, or 4 per cent, were widowed. The remaining 12, or 3.4 per cent, were in no case regularly divorced, but were permanently separated from their wives and have been so scheduled. Of the 392 women, 126, or 32.1 per cent, were single; 178, or 45.4 per cent, were married; 76, or 19.4 per cent, were widowed, and 12, or 3.1 per cent, were permanently separated.

#### CONJUGAL CONDITION, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

| Age periods.            | Males.  |          |           |             | Females. |          |           |             |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|
|                         | Single. | Married. | Wid-owed. | Sepa-rated. | Single.  | Married. | Wid-owed. | Sepa-rated. |
| 15 to 19 years .....    | 79      |          |           |             | 71       | 3        |           |             |
| 20 to 29 years .....    | 55      | 28       |           | 3           | 44       | 51       | 3         | 3           |
| 30 to 39 years .....    | 6       | 46       |           | 1           | 10       | 49       | 6         | 2           |
| 40 to 49 years .....    | 3       | 37       | 3         | 3           |          | 30       | 22        | 3           |
| 50 to 59 years .....    | 2       | 30       | 7         | 4           |          | 32       | 17        | 3           |
| 60 to 69 years .....    | 1       | 20       | 2         |             |          | 9        | 14        | 1           |
| 70 to 79 years .....    |         | 12       | 1         | 1           |          | 4        | 11        |             |
| 80 to 89 years .....    |         | 3        |           |             |          |          | 3         |             |
| 90 to 99 years .....    |         | 1        |           |             |          |          |           |             |
| 100 years or over ..... |         |          | 1         |             |          |          |           |             |
| Unknown .....           | 1       | 1        |           |             | 1        |          |           |             |
| Total .....             | 147     | 178      | 14        | 12          | 126      | 178      | 76        | 12          |

The table following compares the conjugal condition of the Negroes in Farmville with the conjugal condition of the populations of various foreign countries. The table relates to persons 15 years of age or over.

#### CONJUGAL CONDITION OF THE NEGROES OF FARMVILLE AND OF THE POPULATIONS OF VARIOUS FOREIGN COUNTRIES, BY SEX.

[The per cents for Farmville are computed from schedules; those for foreign countries are taken from Mayo-Smith's Statistics and Sociology. The figures for divorced are not shown for the foreign countries.]

| Civil division.     | Per cent of males 15 years of age or over. |          |          | Per cent of females 15 years of age or over. |          |          |
|---------------------|--|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|
|                     | Single.                                    | Married. | Widowed. | Single.                                      | Married. | Widowed. |
| Farmville .....     | 41.9                                       | 50.7     | a 7.4    | 32.1   | 45.4     | a 22.5   |
| France .....        | 36.0                                       | 56.5     | 7.5      | 30.0   | 55.3     | 14.7     |
| Germany .....       | 40.9                                       | 53.7     | 5.3      | 36.5   | 50.8     | 12.4     |
| Great Britain ..... | 39.5                                       | 54.9     | 5.6      | 37.3   | 50.9     | 11.8     |
| Hungary .....       | 31.5                                       | 63.7     | 4.7      | 22.0   | 62.8     | 15.0     |
| Ireland .....       | 49.3                                       | 44.8     | 5.9      | 43.5   | 42.1     | 14.4     |
| Italy .....         | 40.9                                       | 53.1     | 6.0      | 33.2   | 53.2     | 13.6     |

a Including separated.

In the table following the conjugal condition of the Negro population of Farmville is compared with that of the entire population of the United States. Only persons 20 years of age or over are considered.



While facts bearing on miscegenation between whites and blacks are difficult to obtain and interpret, yet they are of interest. Of the 44 illegitimate children mentioned, 10 were, in all probability, children of white men; 4 of these belonged to one mother, who was openly known to be the concubine of a white man who had a white family; 2 of the children belonged to another mother, and there were four mothers each having 1 illegitimate child, making six mothers in all having such children. There is no doubt that this illicit intercourse has greatly decreased in recent years. Curiously enough, there are in the vicinity of the town two cases of intermarriage of colored men and white women, which are undisturbed, despite the law.

Some attempt was made to determine what proportion of the whole population was of mixed blood, but with only partial success. If, as is often assumed in such inquiries, all cases of intermingling were matters of a single generation, or of two, the investigation would be easier. But when a person is a descendant of people of mixed blood for four or five generations the matter becomes very difficult. A record was kept of the personal appearance of a majority of those Negroes of the town who were met by the investigator face to face. Of 705 Negroes thus met, 333 were apparently of unmixed Negro blood; 219 were brown in color and showed traces of white blood, and 153 were yellow or lighter, and showed considerable infusion of white blood. According to this, one-third to one-half the Negroes of the town are of mixed blood, and verifying this by observations on the street and in assemblies, this seemed a fair conclusion.

#### SCHOOLS AND ILLITERACY.

The town of Farmville has no school for colored children, but sends them to the district school just outside the corporation limits. The schoolhouse is a large, pleasantly situated frame building with five rooms. It has one male principal, and one male and three female assistants. It is not at present, if the general testimony of the townspeople is to be taken, a very successful school. It is practically ungraded, the teachers are not particularly well equipped, except in

one, possibly two, cases, and the school term is six months -September 15 to April 1. The teachers' salaries do not average over \$30 a month, which confines the competition for the school to residents of the town.

The average attendance at the school for the year ending in 1895 was 260.5; in 1896 it was 260, and in 1897 it was 269. <sup>13</sup> This is between 80 and 90 per cent of the registration. Of the 512 children in Farmville between the ages of 5 and 20, 239, or 46 per cent, were in school during the year ending in 1897. Of the 367 children between 5 and 15 years of age, 205, or 55.9 per cent, were in school. The following table shows the school attendance by age and sex:

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, BY AGE AND SEX.

| Age.                 | Males.           |            | Females.         |            |
|----------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
|                      | Popula-<br>tion. | In school. | Popula-<br>tion. | In school. |
| 5 years.....         | 20               | .....      | 22               | 1          |
| 6 years.....         | 8                | 1          | 17               | 4          |
| 7 years.....         | 13               | 4          | 19               | 8          |
| 8 years.....         | 13               | 5          | 21               | 13         |
| 9 years.....         | 16               | 11         | 13               | 11         |
| 10 years.....        | 23               | 16         | 15               | 10         |
| 11 years.....        | 14               | 11         | 10               | 7          |
| 12 years.....        | 29               | 21         | 18               | 15         |
| 13 years.....        | 22               | 17         | 7                | 5          |
| 14 years.....        | 15               | 13         | 23               | 15         |
| 15 years.....        | 19               | 9          | 10               | 8          |
| Total .....          | 192              | 108        | 175              | 97         |
| 15 to 20 years ..... | 74               | 13         | 71               | 21         |
| Grand total .....    | 266              | 121        | 246              | 118        |

Between the ages of 5 and 15 years the boys and girls attend school in about the same proportion; after that the boys largely drop out and go to work. As compared with the boys, a larger proportion of the girls receive some training above that of the common grades. The effect of child labor in housework and in the tobacco factories is easily traced in the figures as to the length of school attendance during the year. Of the 205 children from 5 to 15 years of age who attended school during the year 1896-97, only 52 per cent attended the full term of six months, 33 per cent attended half the term, and 11 per cent less than three months. Four per cent eked out the public school term by three or more months in private classes. The following table shows the length of school attendance of children from 5 to 15 years of age by sex:

#### LENGTH OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, BY SEX.

| School attendance. | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|--------------------|--------|----------|--------|
| Under 3 months     | 11     | 11       | 22     |
| 3 months           | 39     | 29       | 68     |
| 6 months           | 55     | 52       | 107    |
| 9 months or over   | 3      | 5        | 8      |
| Total              | 108    | 97       | 205    |

Even so indifferent a school system has had its effect on the illiteracy of the town. Of the 908 people reporting, 42.5 per cent could read and write, 17.5 per cent could read but could not write, while 40 per cent were wholly illiterate. If we divide the population into four classes -those reared in slavery, those reared in time of war and reconstruction, those reared since 1867, and present youth -we can trace the steps of advance by the decreasing amount of illiteracy. Nevertheless, 23 per cent of the youths from 10 to 20 years of age are illiterate. The following table shows the degree of illiteracy by sex and age periods:

LITERATES AND ILLITERATES, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

Sex and age periods. Able to read and write. Able to read. Illiterate. Not reported. Total.

MALES.

|                  |     |    |     |    |     |
|------------------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|
| 10 to 20 years   | 97  | 49 | 45  | 4  | 195 |
| 21 to 30 years   | 38  | 16 | 26  | 1  | 81  |
| 31 to 40 years   | 30  | 7  | 10  |    | 47  |
| 41 years or over | 34  | 13 | 80  | 5  | 132 |
| Age unknown      | 1   | 1  | 1   | 1  | 4   |
| Total males      | 200 | 86 | 162 | 11 | 459 |

FEMALES.

|                  |     |    |     |   |     |
|------------------|-----|----|-----|---|-----|
| 10 to 20 years   | 96  | 21 | 34  | 3 | 154 |
| 21 to 30 years   | 52  | 21 | 23  | 1 | 97  |
| 31 to 40 years   | 28  | 17 | 28  |   | 73  |
| 41 years or over | 10  | 14 | 116 |   | 140 |
| Age unknown      |     |    |     | 1 | 1   |
| Total females    | 186 | 73 | 201 | 5 | 465 |

BOTH SEXES.

|                   |     |     |     |    |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| 10 to 20 years    | 193 | 70  | 79  | 7  | 349 |
| 21 to 30 years    | 90  | 37  | 49  | 2  | 178 |
| 31 to 40 years    | 58  | 24  | 38  |    | 120 |
| 41 years or over  | 44  | 27  | 196 | 5  | 272 |
| Age unknown       | 1   | 1   | 1   | 2  | 5   |
| Total, both sexes | 386 | 159 | 363 | 16 | 924 |

Many of the Farmville boys and girls are attending various schools and academies away from home. Those most frequented, in order of popularity, are: Virginia Seminary, Lynchburg, a colored Baptist school; Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute, Petersburg, a State school; Hartshorn Memorial College, Richmond, a school for girls; Hampton Institute, Hampton; Ingleside Seminary, Burkeville, a Presbyterian school.

One noticeable change in the later generations is that the excess of illiteracy which was formerly among the women is now among the men.

Naturally statistics of illiteracy which depend on voluntary information contain a degree of error. In the present case the least favorable construction was put on all doubtful or evasive answers, and the error is probably not larger than usual in such statistics.

#### OCCUPATIONS AND WAGES.

The opportunities for employment in Farmville explain much as to the present condition of its Negro citizens, as, for example, the migration from country to town and from town to city, the postponement of marriage, the ownership of property, and the general relations between whites and blacks. If we divide the total colored population above 10 years of age according to the popular classification of pursuits, we have in professional occupations, 22; in domestic, 287; in commercial, 45; in agricultural, 15; in industrial, 282; not engaged in gainful occupations, 259, and not reported, 14.

Using a different classification, we have those working on their own account, 36; laboring class, 350; house service, 92; day service, 149; at home, unoccupied, and dependent, 259; professional and clerical, 24, and not reported; 14. The following table shows in detail the occupations, classed by sex and age periods:

#### OCCUPATIONS, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

| Occupations.                   | 10 to 15<br>years. | 16 to 20<br>years. | 21 to 30<br>years. | 31 to 40<br>years. | 41 years or<br>over. | Age<br>unknown. | Total. |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------|
| <b>MALES.</b>                  |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 |        |
| Apprentices                    | 2                  | 2                  | 1                  |                    |                      |                 | 5      |
| Baker                          |                    |                    |                    | 1                  |                      |                 | 1      |
| Barbers                        | 1                  | 1                  | 1                  | 1                  | 1                    |                 | 5      |
| Blacksmiths                    |                    |                    |                    |                    | 2                    |                 | 2      |
| Brakeman                       |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Bricklayers and<br>plasterers  |                    |                    |                    | 2                  | 1                    |                 | 3      |
| Brickmakers                    | 1                  | 6                  | 6                  |                    | 1                    |                 | 14     |
| Butchers                       |                    |                    | 2                  |                    | 1                    |                 | 3      |
| Cabinetmaker                   |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Canning-factory<br>employee    | 1                  |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 | 1      |
| Carpenters                     |                    |                    | 1                  | 2                  | 11                   |                 | 14     |
| Clergymen                      |                    |                    |                    | 2                  | 4                    |                 | 6      |
| Clerk, Railway Mail<br>Service |                    |                    |                    | 1                  |                      |                 | 1      |
| Coachmen                       |                    |                    | 1                  | 1                  |                      |                 | 2      |
| Coopers                        |                    |                    |                    | 1                  | 3                    |                 | 4      |
| Domestic servants              | 7                  | 2                  | 4                  | 1                  | 2                    |                 | 16     |
| Farm laborers                  | 1                  | 1                  | 1                  | 1                  | 9                    |                 | 13     |
| Farmers                        |                    | 2                  |                    |                    |                      |                 | 2      |
| Firemen, stationary<br>engine  | 1                  |                    |                    | 2                  |                      |                 | 3      |
| Hostlers                       |                    |                    | 2                  | 2                  | 1                    |                 | 5      |
| Janitors                       |                    |                    |                    |                    | 3                    |                 | 3      |
| Laborers                       | 11                 | 9                  | 9                  | 4                  | 25                   |                 | 58     |
| Laundry proprietor             |                    |                    |                    | 1                  |                      |                 | 1      |
| Mechanics, wood<br>turning     | 1                  |                    | 2                  | 5                  | 2                    |                 | 10     |
| Merchant, wood                 |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Merchants, grocery             |                    |                    | 1                  | 3                  | 1                    |                 | 5      |
| Painters                       |                    |                    |                    |                    | 3                    |                 | 3      |

|                           |     |    |    |    |     |   |     |
|---------------------------|-----|----|----|----|-----|---|-----|
| Teacher                   |     |    |    | 1  |     |   | 1   |
| Teamsters                 |     | 1  | 1  | 2  | 7   |   | 11  |
| Tobacco-factory employees | 19  | 35 | 39 | 9  | 25  | 1 | 128 |
| Waiters                   |     | 2  | 1  |    |     | 1 | 4   |
| Wheelwright               |     |    |    |    | 1   |   | 1   |
| Not reported              | 4   |    | 1  |    | 3   | 2 | 10  |
| At home                   | 14  | 3  | 2  | 1  | 5   |   | 25  |
| At school <sup>14</sup>   | 58  | 4  | 2  | 1  |     |   | 65  |
| Total males               | 122 | 74 | 81 | 47 | 131 | 4 | 459 |

OCCUPATIONS, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS -Concluded.

| Occupations.  | 10 to 15<br>years. | 16 to 20<br>years. | 21 to 30<br>years. | 31 to 40<br>years. | 41 years<br>or over. | Age<br>unknown. | Total. |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------|
| <b>FEMALES.</b>   |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 |        |
| Bookkeeper  |                    |                    | 1                  |                    |                      |                 | 1      |
| Canning-factory employee                                |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Day workers   | 4                  | 11                 | 9                  | 5                  | 4                    |                 | 33     |
| Day workers and housewives                              |                    | 1                  | 24                 | 28                 | 61                   |                 | 114    |
| Domestic servants                                       | 6                  | 18                 | 27                 | 6                  | 8                    |                 | 65     |
| Merchants, grocery                                      |                    |                    | 1                  | 1                  |                      |                 | 2      |
| Nurses  |                    |                    |                    |                    | 2                    |                 | 2      |
| Public cooks  |                    |                    |                    | 1                  | 1                    |                 | 2      |
| Restaurant keeper                                       |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Seamstresses and housewives                             |                    | 1                  |                    | 4                  | 5                    |                 | 10     |
| Teachers  |                    | 6                  | 8                  | 1                  |                      |                 | 15     |
| Tobacco-factory employees                               | 1                  | 8                  | 4                  | 3                  | 7                    |                 | 23     |
| Tobacco and canning factory<br>employees and housewives |                    | 2                  | 2                  | 8                  | 11                   |                 | 23     |
| Not reported  | 2                  | 1                  |                    |                    |                      | 1               | 4      |
| Housewives  |                    | 3                  | 20                 | 15                 | 29                   |                 | 67     |
| At home   | 16                 | 6                  |                    |                    | 12                   |                 | 34     |
| At school <sup>15</sup>                                 | 54                 | 14                 |                    |                    |                      |                 | 68     |
| Total females   | 83                 | 71                 | 96                 | 72                 | 142                  | 1               | 465    |
| Total males and females                                 | 205                | 145                | 177                | 119                | 273                  | 5               | 924    |

In the table following the Negroes of Farmville are compared with the population of the United States as regards the percentage engaged in certain classes of gainful occupations. The United States census classifications are used.

PER CENT OF NEGROES OF FARMVILLE AND OF TOTAL POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES AT WORK, ENGAGED IN EACH CLASS OF GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS.

[The figures for Farmville are from schedules; those for the United States are from the census of 1890.]

| Classes of occupations.                     | Negroes of Farmville. |          |        |           | Per cent in the United States. |
|---|-----------------------|----------|--------|-----------|--------------------------------|
|   | Males.                | Females. | Total. | Per cent. |                                |
| Agriculture.....                            | 15                    | .....    | 15     | 2.30      | 39.65                          |
| Professional service.....                   | 7                     | 15       | 22     | 3.38      | 4.15                           |
| Domestic and personal service.....          | 91                    | 217      | 308    | 47.31     | 19.18                          |
| Trade and transportation.....               | 44                    | 3        | 47     | 7.22      | 14.63                          |
| Manufactures and mechanical industries..... | 202                   | 57       | 259    | 39.79     | 22.39                          |
| Total.....                                  | 359                   | 292      | 651    | 100.00    | 100.00                         |

While the range of employment open to colored men is not large, that open to women is peculiarly restricted, so that most girls have only the choice between domestic service and housewifery. The different classes of employment are taken up in turn:

**The Professions.** -There are no colored physicians or lawyers in the town, preachers and teachers being the only representatives of the learned professions. The position of preacher is the most influential of all positions among the Negroes, and brings the largest degree of personal respect and social prestige. The two leading preachers in the town receive, the one \$480 and house rent; the other, \$600 a year. Both are graduates of theological seminaries and represent the younger and more progressive element. They use good English and no scandal attaches to their private life, so far as the investigator could learn. Their influence is, on the whole, good, although they are not particularly spiritual guides, being rather social leaders or agents. Such men are slowly but surely crowding out the ignorant but picturesque and, in many particulars, impressive preacher of slavery days. Types of the latter are now to be found only in small churches, or in country districts where they care for two or three churches and receive salaries ranging from \$75 to \$300 a year.

The teacher stands next to the preacher in general esteem. An increasing number of these are now young women, and those in Farmville teach the schools of the surrounding country districts. The school terms are from four to six months, and in addition there is considerable private teaching done. The teachers earn from \$100 to \$250 a year by teaching, and sometimes they do other work during vacation.

**The Entrepreneurs.** -The individual undertaker of business enterprise is a new figure among Negroes, and his rise deserves to be carefully watched, as it means much for the future of the race. The business enterprises in which Farmville Negroes are engaged on their own account are brickmaking, the grocery trade, barbering, restaurant keeping, furniture repairing, silversmithing and clock repairing, shoemaking, wood selling and whip making, steam laundering, contracting and building, painting, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, hotel keeping, and farming, representing in all 32 separate enterprises conducted by 36 proprietors, and employing, besides, about 40 other persons.

The entire brickmaking business of Farmville and vicinity is in the hands of a colored man - a freedman, who bought his own and his family's freedom, purchased his master's estate, and eventually hired his master to work for him. He owns a thousand acres or more of land in

Cumberland County and considerable Farmville property. In his brickyard he hires about 15 hands, mostly boys from 16 to 20 years of age, and runs five or six months a year, making from 200,000 to 300,000 brick. His men receive about \$12 a month, and extra pay for extra work. Probably over one-half the brick houses in and near Farmville are built of brick made in his establishment, and he has repeatedly driven white competitors out of business.

The grocery store, as kept by the Negro, is a comparatively new venture in Farmville, and is quite successful, although most of the stores are naturally small and unpretentious affairs. There are seven grocery stores in the town conducted by Negroes. Of these, three are flourishing and do a business of from \$50 to \$100 a week. The three proprietors of these stores have been in business from five to eight years, are property holders, have a good common-school training, and apparently possess good business judgment. Their wives generally help in the stores, and only occasionally do they hire clerks. Two other stores are newer than these, and are doing fairly well, with prospects of better trade in future. They are kept by young men who got their capital by menial service in New York City. The proprietors of these five stores depend entirely on their business for support. The two other stores are conducted by women as side enterprises. They have only a small patronage. An eighth grocery store, not noted in the table of occupations, was started in August, 1897, during the progress of this investigation.

The barbering and restaurant businesses were the ones to which the freedmen most naturally turned after their training as house servants. On this account, they do not to-day enlist the best talent of the race, since they savor in some respect of the unpleasant past; yet they are still largely followed. The wealthiest Negro in the town is the leading barber, who is reported worth not far from \$10,000. There are five barber shops altogether -three for whites and two for blacks -and all run by Negroes. This is rather too many for the trade of the town, and one at least is being forced out. The income of barbers varies largely; probably from \$5 to \$15 a week would be the average. There are five proprietors, and generally five assistants, who receive from \$3 to \$5 a week. There are two restaurants which do a good business, especially on Saturdays, with the farmers. They employ about four persons besides the proprietors. There is also a lunch business done by one of the grocery stores.

Two blacksmiths and a wheelwright do a good business, sometimes taking in from \$5 to \$8 a day. There are also four shoe makers and repairers and two furniture repairers. A silversmith, who is a good workman, learned his trade of his former master, and is kept busy. There are three contractors -one in painting and two in small building jobs. A colored contractor on a larger scale resides temporarily in the town, but belongs in Richmond. He is building a fine country mansion for the leading white tobacco merchant of the place.

The only steam laundry in the county is conducted by two young colored men, brothers, who also own one in Richmond. The Farmville laundry employs five or six persons besides one of the brothers and his wife. It is equipped with the latest machinery, and the proprietors own the premises. They probably do a business of \$100 a week in summer.

The town jailor, a Negro, is also a wood merchant, whip maker, and farmer. He is assisted by his son, and owns, besides his farm, a pleasant home in town. The timely assistance of a son of his former master enabled him first to become a property holder. He is now educating his younger daughters at the seminary in Lynchburg.<sup>16</sup>

A new enterprise in the town is a bakery and hotel. It occupies a neat building on the main street, and is conducted by a Hampton graduate

and her husband. The bakery so far is the more successful part, but the hotel feature has a chance to grow.

Farmers. -Most of the Negroes have given up farming for the industrial chances of the town. Of those living in town, three -the brickmaker, the wood merchant, and one of the barbers -own large and well-conducted farms. Besides this, nearly every family has a vegetable garden, sometimes of considerable size, from which produce is sold. Many factory hands hire out as farm laborers during the spring and summer; they receive from 35 to 50 cents a day and board, or, if they work by the month, from \$8 to \$10.

Industries. -The industries in which Negroes are employed are tobacco manufacturing, cooperage, wood working, fruit canning, feed grinding, railroading, and brickmaking.

The chief and all-absorbing industry, and the one that characterizes the town, is that of preparing tobacco strips -an industry in which Farmville ranks among the first cities of Virginia. There are in all 16 factories for this industry in the town; two firms operate 4 each; one operates 3; one 2, and three other firms 1 each. These factories are large barnlike structures of wood, 3 or 4 stories high, with many windows.

The manufacture of tobacco strips consists in ridding the dry tobacco leaf of the woody stem. The loose tobacco is taken to the factory and placed on the floor of a room in piles, according to grade, style, and quality. Enough of a certain grade to make a hogshead of strips is then taken to another room and sprinkled and steamed, a little at a time. The bundles are then ready to be stemmed, as the leaves are supple and pliant. Women and young men, assisted by children who untie the bundles and place them in position, dextrously draw out the stems, and the children tie the strips thus left into uniform bundles. The bundles are then weighed, stretched on sticks, and hung up in the drying room for from eight to twelve hours. When thoroughly dried and cooled the tobacco is again steamed as it hangs, and then cooled for two days. Finally, it is steamed a third time in a steam box, straightened, and quickly packed in hogsheads.<sup>17</sup>

The women and young men who stem the tobacco get 50 cents for every hundred pounds of stemmed tobacco, and can, with the aid of children, stem from 100 to 300 pounds a day, thus earning from \$2.50 to \$9 a week or more, for from five to seven months in the year. Other women laborers receive 35 or 40 cents a day, while the men who prize, steam, and pack tobacco receive from 75 cents to \$1 a day for eight or nine months. The better classes of women do not like to work in the factories, and the surroundings are said to be unsuitable for girls. Many children are kept from school all or part of the time to enable them to help in this factory work. An adjunct to the tobacco business is the

making of hogsheads and tierces, in which colored coopers are employed. They earn from \$6 to \$8 a week for the major part of the year.

The "foundry," as it is called, formerly did some iron molding, but now is engaged in woodworking, chiefly the turning of plow handles. It employs ten colored and four white mechanics, and pays them from 75 cents to \$1 a day, without discrimination. The feed mills employ a few Negroes, and the Norfolk and Western and Farmville and Powhatan railways have colored section hands and brakemen. The section hands receive \$1 per day and the brakemen not much more. A canning establishment, which is at present canning tomatoes, employs many women and men. Women receive 2 cents a bucket for paring tomatoes, and can earn from 40 to 50 cents a day; men receive from 75 cents to \$1 a day.

The Trades. -Among the skilled trades Negroes are found as painters, shoemakers, cabinetmakers, coopers, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, brick masons, plasterers, carpenters, bakers, butchers, and whip makers. All of these have been alluded to before, save those in the building trades. There are 14 carpenters, 3 painters, and 3 masons who live in the town, besides several who live in the country and work in town. White and black mechanics are often seen working side by side on the same jobs, and get on without apparent friction, although there is some discrimination in wages. Colored

carpenters get generally from 75 cents to \$1 per day, and painters and masons not over \$1. There are apparently more Negroes with trades than white men, but there is a dearth of young Negro apprentices, so that colored contractors often have to hire white mechanics.

**Clerical Work.** -Very little clerical work of any kind is done by Negroes. There is one railway-mail clerk, who secured his position through civil-service examination. He has had one route for seven years. The wife of the laundry proprietor does his bookkeeping, and occasionally a temporary helper is needed in the colored grocery stores. Very often the colored porters in white business establishments do considerable clerical work; they are, however, paid as porters.

**Common Laborers.** -There are 92 common laborers, including 17 porters and 3 janitors. The porters work in stores and commission houses, and are often old and trusted servants. They earn from \$8 to \$10 a month and board. Three laborers in the foundry receive 50 cents a day; 11 teamsters receive from 75 cents to \$1 a day; the other 58 laborers do odd jobs of all sorts, work now and then on farms or in the tobacco factories, do chores about private houses, drive cows, keep gardens, etc. They receive from 30 to 75 cents a day.

**Domestic Service.** -Twenty-two men and 65 women, among those who appear upon the schedules, and about 75 others, some of whom are residents of the town and some not, are wholly engaged in domestic service. The men receive from \$8 to \$10 a month. The women receive from \$1 to \$5, according to age and work; a general servant in an ordinary

family receiving \$4 a month; a nurse girl, from \$1 to \$3, and a cook, \$5. Besides this they get good board, fair lodging, much cast-off clothing, and not a little training in matters of household economy and taste.

There is considerable dissatisfaction over the state of domestic service. The Negroes are coming to regard the work as a relic of slavery and as degrading, and only enter it from sheer necessity, and then as a temporary makeshift. Parents hate to expose their sons to the early lessons of servility, which are thus learned, and their daughters to the everpossible fate of concubinage.<sup>18</sup> Employers, on the other hand, find an increasing number of careless and impudent young people who neglect their work, and in some cases show vicious tendencies, and demoralize the children of the family. They pay low wages, partly because the Southern custom compels families, who ought to do their own work, to hire help, and they can not afford to pay much; partly, too, because they do not believe the service rendered is worth more. The servants, receiving less than they think they ought, are often careful to render as little for it as possible. They grow to despise the menial work they do, partly because their employers themselves despise it and teach their daughters to do the same.

This may not represent the open, conscious thought of the community, but it is the unconscious tendency of the present situation, which makes one species of honorable and necessary labor difficult to buy or sell without loss of self-respect on one side or the other. One result of this situation is the wholesale emigration of the better class of servants to the North, where they can earn three and often four times the wages for less work. At the same time one curious modification of the domestic-service system is slowly taking place, which may mean much in the future, and that is the fact that Negroes themselves are beginning to hire servants. Ten families among Farmville Negroes regularly hire one servant each, and several others have a woman to help occasionally. This system is, however, very different from the hiring of Negroes by whites. The employers in this case in no respect despise common labor or menial duties, because they themselves have performed such work all their lives. Their servant, too, is a neighbor's daughter, whom they know and like and treat practically as a member of the family. Thus there grows up a system very much like that in New England or in parts of Germany to-day, where housework is honored. At the same time, the Negro employers learn to sympathize with the complaints of the whites as to inefficient servants. In this

way, possibly, the one circumstance which more than all others serves to ruin domestic service in the South may be modified, namely, the making of the term "Negro" and "servant" synonymous. Even to day

the economic importance of the black population of Farmville has brought many white men to say "mister" to the preacher and teacher and to raise their hats to their wives.

Day Service. -Just as the field hand of slavery days developed into the métayer, so the house servant easily developed into the day worker. Thirty-three single women and 114 housewives go out regularly at day work in families or take family washing into their homes. The increased independence of the servant and the decreased responsibility of the employer make this a popular system. It is, however, poorly paid, being a subsidiary employment for most families; and in hard times, when the house servant would have to be retained, it is easy to cut off this sort of worker. Those who work in families are either paid like house servants, by the week, or if they work by the day, from 30 to 50 cents a day. Much neglect of their own household duties and of children, especially of growing girls, is a result of this absence of the mother from home. Those who take in washing receive from 50 to 75 cents for a family wash. The girls at the white normal school pay \$1.25 a month each for their washing. In this way many a Farmville mother helps her husband support the family, or during dull times keeps them all above want.

The Unemployed. -A considerable number of idlers and loafers shows that the industrial situation in Farmville is not altogether satisfactory and that the moral tone of the Negroes has room for great betterment. One of the principal causes of idleness is the irregular employment. A really industrious man who desires work is apt to be thrown out of employment from one-third to one-half of the year by the shutting up of the tobacco factories, the brickyard, or the cannery. If he wants to get on in the world or accumulate property, he often finds that he must seek better wages and steadier employment elsewhere; or if he can not himself go, he sends a son or a daughter. Fully one-half, if not two-thirds, of the property owned by Negroes in the town has been paid for in large part with money earned outside the town. On the other hand, if the man be of only ordinary caliber he easily lapses into the habit of working part of the year and loafing the rest. This habit is especially pernicious for half-grown boys, and leads to much evil. Undoubtedly the present situation prolongs some of the evils of the slave system, and is the cause of much of that apparent laziness and irresponsibility for which so many Negroes are justly criticised. It is also true that larger, better, and steadier industrial opportunities in a town like Farmville would in time be able to counteract the tendency of youth to emigrate, would build up a faithful and efficient laboring community, and would pay good dividends to the projectors of new enterprises. The great demand is for steady employment which is not menial, at fair wages.

The women, too, demand enlarged industrial opportunities outside of domestic service, and of a kind compatible with decency and self-respect. They are on the whole more faithful and are becoming better

educated than the men, and they are capable of doing far better work than they have a chance to do. As it is they can only become servants, and if they must serve they prefer \$12 a month in New York to \$4 in Farmville. This explains the growing excess of colored women over colored men in many Northern cities.

However, besides all these willing workers, or those capable of training, there is undoubtedly in Farmville the usual substratum of loafers and semicriminals who will not work. There are probably five or six regular prostitutes, who ply their trade chiefly on Saturday nights. There are also some able-bodied men who gamble, and fish, and drink. Then there are the men who work, but who spend their time and money in company with the lowest classes. These people live in a few crowded tenements, easily distinguished, and are regarded by whites and blacks as beneath notice.

Occasionally serious crime is perpetrated by this class, but their depredations are generally petty and

annoying rather than dangerous. During 1896, 13 Negroes were indicted for serious crimes in the whole county; 4, for housebreaking, received sentences varying from six months in jail to four years in the penitentiary; 3, for petty larceny and assault, received a few months in jail; 2, for infanticide and attempted murder, received three and eight years, respectively, in the penitentiary; 3, for highway robbery, received from five to fifteen years in the penitentiary, and 1 received ten years for horsestealing.<sup>19</sup> In the town some ten years since, there was one case of lynching for rape; but it is now generally conceded that the female was a lewd character, and that the black boy was guilty of no crime.

The slum elements of Farmville are as yet small in number, but they are destined to grow with the town. They receive recruits from the lazy, shiftless, and dissolute of the country around; they send them on to Washington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore as fit candidates for the worst criminal classes of those cities. The problem of Negro crime, therefore, is best studied and solved in towns of this size.

### ECONOMICS OF THE FAMILY.

The question of the size of Negro families is important, but difficult to determine, on account of the varying meanings of the word "family." The economic family, i. e., those living together under conditions of family life, must obviously be the unit of a national census, but when it is used as the basis of a study of the fecundity of a certain part of the population the logic is dangerous. For this reason an attempt has been made to schedule the Negro families according to three conceptions of the word "family," viz:

- 1. The possible family, i. e., the parents and all children ever born to them living.
- 
- 2. The real family, i. e., the parents and all children living at present.
- 
- 3. The economic family, i. e., all persons, related and unrelated, living in one home under conditions of family life.

Statistics of the possible family are not complete, partly on account of the difficulty of obtaining reliable answers and partly because this question was inserted in the schedules after the canvass had begun. The answers to the other questions are fairly full. The following table presents statistics of Negro families in Farmville:

### NUMBER OF FAMILIES, BY SIZE.

The small number of cases makes the figures for the possible family of value only as vaguely indicating the extreme limit of Negro reproduction which the large infant mortality and the preventive check to reproduction (late marriages) keep from realization. This method of inquiry rightly pursued might make an interesting comment on Malthusianism. The size of the real family comes nearest to being a true test of the fecundity of the race under present conditions, while the economic family shows the results of the present economic conditions. The economic family in Farmville is the complement of the Negro family in a city like Philadelphia, and these two families are very often but parts of one family; for married couples going North often leave their children in Farmville, and single persons live alone in cities and are counted as families of one, etc. In this way the continual migration complicates the question of the size of Negro families. Nevertheless, when all allowances are made, there is no doubt that the average Negro family in Farmville, in Virginia, and

probably throughout the country is gradually decreasing in size. This is natural and salutary, and is due to-day not so much to a large death rate -for that is a factor which has always been reckoned upon and was undoubtedly more powerful

in the past than now -but to the comparatively sudden application of the preventive check to population, viz, late marriages. This view receives further confirmation if we compare various sizes of families among Farmville Negroes with the sizes of families in the whole United States and in the North Atlantic States. This comparison is shown in the following table:

PER CENT OF NEGRO FAMILIES OF FARMVILLE AND OF TOTAL FAMILIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC STATES IN EACH GROUP, BY SIZE OF FAMILY.

[The figures for Farmville are from schedules; those for the United States are from the census of 1890.]

| Size of family.    | Negroes of Farmville. | United States. | North Atlantic States. |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1 member           | 4.96                  | 3.63           | 3.23                   |
| 2 to 6 members     | 72.90                 | 73.33          | 78.05                  |
| 7 to 10 members    | 19.47                 | 20.97          | 17.00                  |
| 11 members or over | 2.67                  | 2.07           | 1.72                   |

The houses which the 262 Negro families of Farmville occupy vary from 1 to 9 rooms each in size, but have generally 2 or 3 rooms. The following table gives the distribution of families by size of family and number of rooms to the dwellings they occupy:

#### FAMILIES, BY SIZE OF FAMILY, AND NUMBER OF ROOMS TO A DWELLING.

The one-room cabin is rapidly disappearing from the town. Nearly all the 17 one-room dwellings are old log cabins, although there are a few frame tenements of this size. Such houses have one or two windows, a door, and usually a stone fireplace. They are from 15 to 20 feet square. The 134 two-room homes are mostly tenements. A large cheaply built frame house is constructed so as to contain two such tenements. In such houses the kitchen, by a very sensible arrangement of the tenants, is usually upstairs and the living room on the first floor. The rooms are from 15 to 18 feet square and have two windows. The staircase in many instances is open, so that there is no way to shut off the upper room. Three-room houses are generally owned by their

occupants, and are neater and more tasteful than the tenements. They are usually tiny, new frame structures, with two rooms, one above the other, at the front, and a small one-story addition, for the kitchen, in the rear. To this a small veranda is often added. Four-room houses are similar, with a room above the kitchen, or are built similar to the double tenement houses. The large houses generally follow the plan of the old Virginia mansion, with a wide hall and rooms on either side in both stories. Few of the houses have cellars and many are poorly built. Nearly all, however, are in healthful locations, with good water near by and a garden spot.

Of the 262 families, 6.5 per cent occupied one-room homes; 51.1 per cent, two-room homes; 17.2 per cent, three-room homes; 11.8 per cent, four-room homes, and 13.4 per cent, homes of five or more rooms. On an average there were 1.61 persons to a room and 2.9 rooms to a family. There are about 240 separate houses occupied by Negroes.

Of the 262 families, 114, or 43.5 per cent, own the homes they occupy, and 148 families, or 56.5 per cent, rent. The following table shows the number of families owning and renting homes by size of dwellings:

#### FAMILIES OWNING AND RENTING HOMES, BY NUMBER OF ROOMS TO A DWELLING

Of these 148 tenants, 15 rent from Negroes and 133 from whites. Several of the tenants own land. The rents paid by 83 typical tenants are reported in the following table, and from these the total annual rent charge of this community is estimated at about \$5,000:

#### RENTS PAID BY TYPICAL FAMILIES, BY NUMBER OF ROOMS TO A DWELLING.

The total annual income of the 262 families is naturally very difficult to fix with accuracy. Written accounts are seldom kept, and many families could not answer if they would. However, wages do not vary much in the town, and by taking into account the usual wages received, the months employed during the year, the total wage earners in the family, and the general style of living, the accompanying estimate has been made, which seems to give a fair indication of the truth, although the possibility of error is considerable.

#### NUMBER OF FAMILIES, BY SIZE OF FAMILY AND ANNUAL INCOME.

Such figures are better understood when they are read in connection with figures as to the cost and scale of living in the community. The following price list of commodities usually bought by Negroes is therefore presented. The data were furnished by colored grocers.

**PRICES OF COMMODITIES AT FARMVILLE:**

| Article.               | Unit.         | Price.                                       |
|------------------------|---------------|--|
| Food, etc.:            |               |  |
| Fresh pork             | Pound         | \$0.06                                       |
| Pork steak             | Pound         | \$0.08 to .10                                |
| Beefsteak              | Pound         | .08 to .10                                   |
| Ham and bacon          | Pound         | .08 to .10                                   |
| Chickens               | Each          | .12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> to .15       |
| Hens                   | Each          | .20 to .25                                   |
| Turkeys                | Pound         | .07  |
| Wheat flour            | 12-pound bag. | .35  |
| Wheat flour            | Barrel        | 4.00 to 4.50                                 |
| Corn meal              | Peck          | .11 to .12                                   |
| Rice                   | Pound         | .05 to .06                                   |
| Cabbage                | Head          | .01 to .06                                   |
| Potatoes               | Bushel        | .50 to .60                                   |
| Green corn             | Ear           | .01  |
| Tomatoes               | Gallon        | .05  |
| Peas                   | Quart         | .05  |
| Beans                  | Quart         | .05  |
| Canned goods           | Can           | .08 to .10                                   |
| Tea                    | Pound         | .40  |
| Coffee                 | Pound         | .15 to .18                                   |
| Sugar                  | Pound         | .05 to .06                                   |
| Lard                   | Pound         | .07 to .08                                   |
| Article.               | Unit.         | Price.                                       |
| Food, etc. -Concluded. |               |  |
| Butter                 | Pound         | \$0.12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> to \$0.25 |
| Salt                   | Pound         | .01  |
| Herrings               | Each          | .01  |
| Eggs                   | Dozen         | .10 to .12                                   |
| Apples                 | Peck          | .05 to .25                                   |
| Apples, dried          | Pound         | .06  |
| Watermelons            | Each          | .01 to .20                                   |
| Pepper                 | Pound         | .15  |

|                  |        |               |
|------------------|--------|---------------|
| Coal, anthracite | Ton    | 7.50          |
| Kerosene oil     | Gallon | .15           |
| Clothing:        |        |               |
| Men's suits      | Each   | 7.00 to 12.00 |
| Boys' suits      | Each   | 2.00 to 5.00  |
| Women's dresses  | Each   | 3.00 to 8.00  |

In this connection the following budgets, estimated by the three leading colored grocers of Farmville, are also given. The budgets relate to the yearly incomes and expenditures of three families, each consisting of 5 persons.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF FAMILY OF 5 PERSONS IN MODERATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF FAMILY OF 5 PERSONS IN POOR CIRCUMSTANCES.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF FAMILY OF 5 PERSONS OWNING HOME AND IN MODERATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

These budget are not the actual written accounts of particular families, because it is difficult in an unlettered community to obtain such accounts, but are based, as mentioned above, on the estimates of the three leading colored grocers, and represent the accounts of various families who trade at their stores. As such they possess considerable value. In the light of these budgets, and from actual observation, the

investigator has concluded that of the 262 families, about 29 live in poverty with less than suffices for ordinary comfort, 128 are in moderate circumstances, 63 are comfortable, and 42 well-to do according to the standard of the town.

With fairly steady employment, and perhaps the aid of a grown son or daughter, an ordinary colored family finds it possible to buy a lot for from \$50 to \$100, and build a three-room house thereon at a cost of from \$300 to \$500. A building association composed of both colored and white shareholders, but largely conducted by the whites, has greatly facilitated the buying of property by Negroes. Ex-masters and white friends also have often helped. On the other hand, there have been flagrant cases of cheating the ignorant freedmen, and sometimes of making them pay twice for the same land.

The following detailed list of actual Negro taxpayers in the town in 1895, with their holdings, will best illustrate the division of property among them. Some changes have occurred since 1895, but not enough to make material difference.

ASSESSED VALUATION OF REAL ESTATE OWNED BY NEGROES WITHIN THE CORPORATION OF FARMVILLE, 1895.

While the above table seems to show but 119 taxpayers, there were in reality 124 individual property holders among the Negroes, two or more in some cases holding a single piece of property.

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Among the whites there were 232 holders of real estate. The largest assessed valuation placed upon real estate held by any one Negro of the town was \$2,800; by any one white, \$16,000. Seventy-seven whites owned \$2,500 or more worth of real estate each.

In addition to the Negro realty holders in the town of Farmville, there were in the district of Farmville a considerable number of landowners, chiefly farmers. The detailed list of these shown in the statement following gives some idea of the size of farms held by Negroes in the surrounding county districts. Those owning lots from one-eighth to one-half of an acre in size live near town and are included in the general totals of this study, but not in the table above.

ASSESSED VALUATION OF REAL ESTATE OWNED BY NEGROES IN FARMVILLE DISTRICT,  
EXCLUSIVE OF THE TOWN OF FARMVILLE, 1895. <sup>20</sup>

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A SIDE LIGHT: ISRAEL HILL.

By the will of John Randolph, of Roanoke, his slaves were emancipated at his death in 1833. By a similar act on the part of another member of the Randolph family a number of slaves were emancipated and given a tract of land in the district of Farmville called Israel Hill, and situated about 2 miles west of the town. The descendants of these slaves still live here, and their peculiar situation together with the smallness of this farming community makes a brief study of its conditions valuable for the light it throws on Farmville conditions.

In this community many disturbing factors in Negro development are eliminated. Race antagonism is in its lowest terms, because there is but one white family near the community. The land question is partly settled, because nearly all the farmers own their land. One economic problem, however, remains unsettled, and that is the problem of sufficient paying employment for men and women. This economic demand, and its attempted settlement by wholesale emigration to a neighboring industrial center, receives curious illustration in the case of Israel Hill and Farmville.

August 1, 1897, Israel Hill had a population of 123 inhabitants. The numbers are too small to warrant positive conclusions, and yet it is noticeable what a gap the emigration of the young men and women has left. Only a fourth of the total population reporting as to age are between the ages of 20 and 50, although under normal conditions this part of a community is about 40 per cent of the whole. The accompanying table gives in detail the population of Israel Hill, by sex and age periods:

POPULATION OF ISRAEL HILL, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

| Age periods.   | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|----------------|--------|----------|--------|
| 1 to 9 years   | 14     | 11       | 25     |
| 10 to 19 years | 12     | 9        | 21     |
| 20 to 29 years | 11     | 2        | 13     |
| 30 to 39 years |        | 3        | 3      |
| 40 to 49 years | 3      | 6        | 9      |
| 50 to 59 years | 5      | 12       | 17     |
| 60 to 69 years | 3      | 2        | 5      |
| 70 to 79 years | 2      |          | 2      |
| 80 to 89 years | 2      | 1        | 3      |
| Not reported   | 12     | 13       | 25     |
| Total          | 64     | 59       | 123    |

The economic stress is also exemplified in the conjugal condition of the group. Only one person under 30 years of age of those reporting is married. Of all the men reporting who were above 20 years of age, two-fifths are bachelors, and of the women 4 out of 26 are unmarried. The following table gives the conjugal condition in detail, by sex and age periods.

#### CONJUGAL CONDITION OF POPULATION OF ISRAEL HILL, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

Regarding the conditions as to illiteracy, shown in detail in the table following, we find that 32, or 43 per cent, of those over 10 years of age who reported are wholly illiterate; 10, or 14 per cent, can read, and 32, or 43 per cent, can read and write:

#### LITERATES AND ILLITERATES OF POPULATION OF ISRAEL HILL, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

There is a small schoolhouse in the midst of the settlement where a Farmville teacher holds a session of about five months each year. Of the 36 children between 5 and 20 years of age, 16 attended school; of those between 5 and 15 years old, 14 attended school. Of the children under 10 years of age, 3 were illegitimate. The following table gives the school attendance in detail:

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT ISRAEL HILL, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS.

The men are mostly employed at farming or in the tobacco factories of Farmville, whither they can walk each day. The women are generally engaged in housework and farming; a few are at service and in the Farmville tobacco factories. The question of employment is a

serious one here. Farming alone on the small, impoverished farms, far from a market, does not at present pay. If, however, one can follow it as a side occupation and earn fair wages at something else he can live prosperously. Thus the carpenters and masons are in a flourishing condition, with neat, new frame houses and decent-looking farms. The factory hands and those who have grown children working at service in the North or elsewhere do next best. The rest, however, have a hard time scratching sustenance from the earth and living in the same ancient one-room cabins in which their fathers lived. The following table gives the occupations in detail, by sex and age periods:

#### OCCUPATIONS OF POPULATION OF ISRAEL HILL BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS

| Occupations.                 | 11 to 15<br>years. | 16 to 20<br>years. | 21 to 30<br>years. | 31 to 40<br>years. | 41 years or<br>over. | Age<br>unknown. | Total. |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------|
| <b>MALES.</b>                |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 |        |
| Brick mason                  |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Carpenters                   |                    |                    |                    |                    | 3                    |                 | 3      |
| Farm laborers                | 2                  | 2                  | 4                  |                    | 3                    |                 | 11     |
| Farmers                      |                    |                    | 1                  |                    | 5                    |                 | 6      |
| Laborer                      | 1                  |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 | 1      |
| Tobacco-factory<br>employees |                    | 4                  | 3                  |                    | 1                    |                 | 8      |
| Waiter                       |                    |                    | 1                  |                    |                      |                 | 1      |
| Not reported                 |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      | 12              | 12     |
| At home                      | 1                  |                    |                    |                    | 2                    |                 | 3      |
| At school                    | 3                  |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 | 3      |
| Total males                  | 7                  | 6                  | 9                  |                    | 15                   | 12              | 49     |
| <b>FEMALES.</b>              |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      |                 |        |
| Day worker                   |                    |                    |                    |                    | 1                    |                 | 1      |
| Domestic servants            | 1                  |                    |                    | 1                  |                      |                 | 2      |
| Farmers                      |                    |                    |                    |                    | 4                    |                 | 4      |
| Housewives and at<br>work    |                    |                    |                    |                    | 2                    |                 | 2      |
| Tobacco-factory<br>employees | 1                  |                    | 2                  |                    |                      |                 | 3      |
| Not reported                 |                    |                    |                    |                    |                      | 13              | 13     |
| Housewives                   |                    |                    |                    | 2                  | 11                   |                 | 13     |
| At home                      |                    |                    |                    |                    | 3                    |                 | 3      |
| At school                    | 3                  | 2                  |                    |                    |                      |                 | 5      |
| Total females                | 5                  | 2                  | 2                  | 3                  | 21                   | 13              | 46     |
| Total males and<br>females   | 12                 | 8                  | 11                 | 3                  | 36                   | 25              | 95     |

Some newcomers have disturbed the calm of this sleepy village. Of the 98 inhabitants of Israel Hill who reported their place of birth. 57 persons, or 58 per cent, were born in the settlement, 11 persons were born in Prince Edward County outside of Israel Hill, and all of the others, except 1 born in Kentucky, were born in adjoining counties. Those who have come from elsewhere have generally come through marriage. Twenty-five did not report their birthplaces.

Of the 25 families 22 own their homes. The other 3 rent of colored landlords, and 1 of the renters owns land. The holdings of land vary from 4.5 to 35.5 acres, and the farms and buildings are assessed at sums ranging from \$40 to \$300, the total assessed value of the community's real estate being about \$2,500 or \$3,000.

Seven of the 25 families live in one-room log cabins; 9 live in two-room log cabins, i. e., cabins with a lower room and a loft for sleeping purposes; 3 live in neat three-room frame houses, and 6 live in houses

of four rooms or more. The average size of the families is 4.9 members. The real family, i. e., parents and all living children, is much larger than this. There are 13 families of five or more members, 4 of four members, 2 of three, 5 of two, and 1 of one member. There are about 2 persons to a room and 2.5 rooms to a family.

On the whole, this little hamlet presents two pictures in strange juxtaposition -one of discouragement, stagnation, and retrogression, the other of enterprise and quiet comfort. The key to the situation is the migration of the youth. Where a prospect of profitable employment has kept them at home the community has correspondingly prospered; but where they have been compelled, or thought themselves compelled, to seek work elsewhere and have left the farm and the old folks and children and gone to Farmville or farther their homes have fallen generally into decay.

#### GROUP LIFE.

The Negroes of Farmville, Israel Hill, and the neighboring county districts form a closed and in many respects an independent group life. They live largely in neighborhoods with one another, they have their own churches and organizations and their own social life, they read their own books and papers, and their group life touches that of the white people only in economic matters. Even here the strong influence of group attraction is being felt, and Negroes are beginning to patronize either business enterprises conducted by themselves or those conducted in a manner to attract their trade. Thus, instead of the complete economic dependence of blacks upon whites, we see growing a nicely adjusted economic interdependence of the two races, which promises much in the way of mutual forbearance and understanding.

The most highly developed and characteristic expression of Negro group life in this town, as throughout the Union, is the Negro church. The church is, among American Negroes, the primitive social group of the slaves on American soil, replacing the tribal life roughly disorganized by the slave ship, and in many respects antedating the establishment of the Negro monogamic home. The church is much more than a religious organization; it is the chief organ of social and intellectual intercourse. As such it naturally finds the free democratic organizations of the Baptists and Methodists better suited to its purpose than the stricter bonds of the Presbyterians or the more aristocratic and ceremonious Episcopalians. Of the 262 families of Farmville, only 1 is Episcopalian and 3 are Presbyterian; of the rest, 26 are Methodist and 218 Baptist. In the town of Farmville there are 3 colored church edifices, and in the surrounding country there are 3 or 4 others.

The chief and overshadowing organization is the First Baptist Church of Farmville. It owns a large brick edifice on Main street. The auditorium, which seats about 500 people, is tastefully finished in lightwood with carpet, small organ, and stained glass windows. Beneath this is

a large assembly room with benches. This building is really the central clubhouse of the community, and in greater degree than is true of the country church in New England or the West. Various organizations meet here, entertainments and lectures take place here, the church collects and distributes considerable sums of money, and the whole social life of the town centers here. The unifying and directing force is, however, religious exercises of some sort. The result of this is not so much that recreation and social life have become stiff and austere, but rather that religious exercises have acquired a free and easy expression and in some respects serve as amusement-giving agencies. For instance, the camp meeting is simply a picnic, with incidental sermon and singing; the rally of country churches, called the "big meeting," is the occasion of the pleasantest social intercourse, with a free barbecue; the Sunday-school convention and the various preachers' conventions are occasions of reunions and festivities. Even the weekly Sunday service serves as a pleasant meeting and greeting place for working people who find little time for visiting during the week.

From such facts, however, one must not hastily form the conclusion that the religion of such churches is hollow or their spiritual influence bad. While under present circumstances the Negro church can not be simply a spiritual agency, but must also be a social, intellectual, and economic center, it nevertheless is a spiritual center of wide influence; and in Farmville its influence carries nothing immoral or baneful. The sermons are apt to be fervent repetitions of an orthodox Calvinism, in which, however, hell has lost something of its terrors through endless repetition; and joined to this is advice directed against the grosser excesses of drunkenness, gambling, and other forms disguised under the general term "pleasure" and against the anti-social peccadillos of gossip, "meanness," and undue pride of position. Very often a distinctly selfish tone inculcating something very like sordid greed and covetousness is, perhaps unconsciously, used; on the other hand, kindness, charity, and sacrifice are often taught. In the midst of all, the most determined, energetic, and searching means are taken to keep up and increase the membership of the church, and "revivals," long-continued and loud, although looked upon by most of the community as necessary evils, are annually instituted in the August vacation time. Revivals in Farmville have few of the wild scenes of excitement which used to be the rule; some excitement and screaming, however, are encouraged, and as a result nearly all the youth are "converted" before they are of age. Certainly such crude conversions and the joining of the church are far better than no efforts to curb and guide the young.

The Methodist church, with a small membership, is the second social center of Farmville, and there is also a second Baptist church, of a little lower grade, with more habitual noise and shouting.

Next to the churches in importance come the secret and beneficial organizations, which are of considerable influence. Their real function is to provide a fund for relief in cases of sickness and for funeral

expenses. The burden which would otherwise fall on one person or family is, by small, regular contributions, made to fall on the group. This business feature is then made attractive by a ritual, ceremonies, officers, often a regalia, and various social features. On the whole, the societies have been peculiarly successful when we remember that they are conducted wholly by people whose greatest weakness is lack of training in business methods.

The oldest society is one composed of 40 or 50 women -the Benevolent Society -which has been in existence in Farmville for over twenty years. There is a local lodge of Odd Fellows with about 35 members, which owns a hall. The Randolph Lodge of Masons has 25 members, and holds its sessions in a hired hall, together with the Good Samaritans, a semireligious secret order, with 25 local members. One of the most remarkable orders is that of the True Reformers, which has headquarters in Richmond, conducts a bank there, and has real estate all over Virginia. There are two "fountains" of this order in Farmville, with perhaps 50 members in all.

There have lately been some interesting attempts at cooperative industrial enterprises, and some capital was collected. Nothing tangible has, however, as yet resulted.

There is a genial and pleasant social life maintained among the Farmville Negroes, clustering chiefly about the churches. Three pretty distinctly differentiated social classes appear. The highest class is composed of farmers, teachers, grocers, and artisans, who own their homes, and do not usually go out to domestic service; the majority of them can read and write, and many of the younger ones have been away to school. The investigator met this class in several of their social gatherings; once at a supper given by one of the grocers. The host was a young man in the thirties, with good common school training. There were eight in his family - a mother-in law, wife, five children, and himself. The house, a neat two-story frame, with 6 or 8 rooms, was on Main street, and was recently purchased of white people at a cost of about \$1,500. There was a flower and vegetable garden, cow and pigs, etc. The party consisted of a mail clerk and his wife; a barber's wife, the widowed daughter of the wood merchant; a young man, an employee in a tobacco factory, and his wife, who had been in service in Connecticut; a middle aged woman, graduate of Hampton, and others. After a preliminary chat, the company assembled in a back dining room. The host and hostess did not seat themselves, but served the company with chicken, ham, potatoes, corn, bread and butter, cake, and ice cream. Afterwards the company went to the parlor and talked, and sang -mostly hymns -by the aid of a little organ, which the widow played. At another time there was a country picnic on a farm 20 miles from town. The company started early and arrived at 10 o'clock on a fine old Virginia plantation, with manor house, trees, and lawn. The time was passed in playing croquet, tossing the bean bag, dancing, and lunching.

Again, a considerable company was invited to a farm house about a mile from town, near Israel Hill, where an evening was passed in eating and dancing. <sup>22</sup> Often the brickmaker opened his hospitable door and entertained with loaded tables and games of various sorts.

Among this class of people the investigator failed to notice a single instance of any action not indicating a thoroughly good moral tone. There was no drinking, no lewdness, no questionable conversation, nor was there any one in any of the assemblies against whose character there was any well-founded accusation. The circle was, to be sure, rather small, and there was a scarcity of young men. It was particularly noticeable that three families in the town, who, by reason of their incomes and education would have naturally moved in the best circle, were rigidly excluded. In two of these there were illegitimate children, and in the third a wayward wife. Of the Farmville families about 40 - possibly fewer -belonged to this highest class.

Leaving the middle class for a moment, let us turn to the Farmville slums. There are three pretty well-defined slum districts -one near the railroad, one on South street, and one near the race track. In all, there would appear to be about 45 or 50 families of Negroes who are below the line of ordinary respectability, living in loose sexual relationship, responsible for most of the illegitimate children, chief supporters of the two liquor shops, and furnishing a half-dozen street walkers and numerous gamblers and rowdies. It is the emigration of this class of people to the larger cities that has recently brought to notice the large number of Negro criminals and the development of a distinct criminal class among them. Probably no people suffer more from the depredations of this class than the mass of colored people themselves, and none are less protected against them, because the careless observer overlooks patent social differences and attributes to the race excesses indulged in by a distinctly differentiated class. These slum elements are not particularly vicious and quarrelsome, but rather shiftless and debauched. Laziness and promiscuous sexual intercourse are their besetting sins. Considerable whisky and cider are consumed, but there is not much open drunkenness. Undoubtedly this class severely taxes the patience of the public authorities of the town.

The remaining 170 or more families, the great mass of the population, belong to a class between the two already described, with tendencies distinctly toward the better class rather than toward the worse. This class is composed of working people, domestic servants, factory hands, porters, and the like; they are a happy minded, sympathetic people, teachable and faithful; at the same time they are not generally very energetic or resourceful, and, as a natural result of long repression, lack "push." They have but recently become used to responsibility, and their moral standards have not yet acquired that fixed character and superhuman sanction necessary in a new people. Here and there their daughters have fallen before temptation, or their sons contracted slothful or vicious habits. However, the effort to maintain and raise the moral standard is sincere and continuous. No black woman can to-day, in the town of Farmville, be concubine to a white man without losing all social position -a vast revolution in twenty years; no black girl of the town can have an illegitimate child without being shut off from the best class of people and looked at askance by ordinary folks. Usually such girls find it pleasanter to go North and work at service, leaving their children with their mothers.

Finally, it remains to be noted that the whole group life of Farmville Negroes is pervaded by a peculiar hopefulness on the part of the people themselves. No one of them doubts in the least but that one day black people will have all rights they are now striving for, and that the Negro will be recognized among the earth's great peoples. Perhaps this simple faith is, of all products of emancipation, the one of the greatest social and economic value.

#### CONCLUSION.

A study of a community like Farmville brings to light facts favorable and unfavorable, and conditions good, bad, and indifferent. Just how the whole should be interpreted is perhaps doubtful. One thing, however, is clear, and that is the growing differentiation of classes among Negroes, even in small communities. This most natural and encouraging result of 30 years' development has not yet been sufficiently impressed upon general students of the subject, and leads to endless contradiction and confusion. For instance, a visitor might tell us that the Negroes of Farmville are idle, unreliable, careless with their earnings, and lewd; another visitor, a month later, might say that Farmville Negroes are industrious, owners of property, and slowly but steadily advancing in education and morals. These apparently contradictory statements made continually of Negro groups all over the land are both true to a degree, and become mischievous and misleading only when stated without reservation as true of a whole community, when they are in reality true only of certain classes in the community. The question then becomes, not whether the Negro is lazy and criminal, or industrious and ambitious, but rather what, in a given community, is the proportion of lazy to industrious Negroes, of paupers to property holders, and what is the tendency of development in these classes. Bearing this in mind, it seems fair to conclude, after an impartial study of Farmville conditions, that the industrious and property accumulating class of the Negro citizens best represents, on the whole, the general tendencies of the group. At the same time, the mass of sloth and immorality is still large and threatening.

How far Farmville conditions are true elsewhere in Virginia the present investigator has no means of determining. He sought by inquiry and general study to choose a town which should in large degree typify the condition of the Virginia Negro to-day. How far Farmville fulfills this wish can only be determined by further study.

#### Notes

1 There were 582 slaveholders in the county in 1860, holding 7,341 slaves. Of these slaves 1,289 were held in lots of from 1 to 9 by 303 owners, and the rest by 279 owners. See census of 1860.

2 In 1890 there were 39 manufacturing establishments in the county, with a capital of \$113,285 and an annual output worth \$183,362.

3 The Norfolk and Western, running east and west through Farmville, the Richmond and Danville, running north and south and crossing the southeastern part of the county, and a narrow-gauge road connecting Farmville and the James River.

4 The county received \$8,343 as its share of the State school fund. It spent \$2,058 for charity and \$429 for roads and bridges. For schools it spent in all \$13,565, distributed as follows: Salaries for teachers, \$10,894; construction and care of buildings, \$770; libraries and apparatus, \$10; miscellaneous, \$1,891. The county has no debt. There were, in 1890, 20 paupers in the county almshouse, 4 white and 16 black See Eleventh Census.

5 The operations in the Grant campaigns of 1864 and 1865 took place near and in Farmville, and Lee surrendered in a neighboring county.

6 Not reported.

7 There are possibly more omissions in an investigation of this sort than in a census, where the primary object is to count the population. No attempt was made in this investigation to reach servants living entirely in white families, and persons habitually absent, although calling Farmville their home, were omitted. Making all allowances, however, the Negro population seems to have fallen off.

8 Not reported.

9 There was also a "bucket shop" in full blast during the summer of 1897, where considerable gambling in stock "futures" was indulged in.

10 Letters of introduction and some personal acquaintances among the people rendered intercourse easy. The information gathered in the schedules was supplemented by conversations with townspeople and school teachers, by general observation, and by the records in the county clerk's office.

11 The number of females in excess would be still larger if the omitted house servants were included. However, they are not in all, if in a majority of, cases citizens of Farmville, but have homes in the country. Those living in Farmville are perhaps balanced by other omissions.

12 The numbers involved in the Farmville inquiry were of course very small, and conclusions from percentages computed from them must consequently be made with due reservation. It is not intended in this or similar cases to push comparisons too far, but in all cases the conclusions stated are borne out by general observation here and elsewhere as well as by the figures.

13 From records in county superintendent's office, Prospect, Prince Edward County.

14 Children who do nothing but attend school. Many of the children work at service or in the tobacco factories a part of the year and also attend school. Such children are here enumerated under their occupations, and not as school children.

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16 One of the shoemakers was also materially aided by his master. At the close of the war the master gave him the stock of leather and tools in the shop and never asked for pay. There are other cases of good will of this sort between ex-master and freedman.

17 See United States Census of 1880, Statistics of Agriculture, Report on Culture of and Curing Tobacco, p. 211.

18 This is, of course, much more rare now than formerly, but nearly all present cases originated in the close contact of female servants with thoughtless or designing members of families.

19 Three murder cases were tried in the county by change of venue. The majority of petty cases were tried by justices. See records in county clerk's office, Farmville.

20 The county is divided into several districts, one of which is called Farmville district; a small part of this district is incorporated and called the town of Farmville.

21 Not reported.

22 Dancing, although indulged in somewhat, is frowned upon by the churches and is not a general amusement with the better classes.