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VII
SLAVE TO FREEDMAN

Paul S. Taylor

**Institute of Business and
Economic Research**



**University of California,
Berkeley**

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SLAVE TO FREEDMAN

by

Paul S. Taylor

University of California, Berkeley

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INTRODUCTION: IN PERSPECTIVE

In the beginning, Africans transported to regions now the United States were brought to labor on the lands of the South. Very few ever left the South to labor on lands elsewhere. In 1960, nearly a century after emancipation, less than 6 percent of rural Negroes lived in the North and only 1.5 percent in the West. Ninety-three percent remained close to where their ancestors had arrived, and where the first steps towards transformation of slavery into freedom were mainly taken.

With conclusion of the Civil War, Negroes were free for the first time to move about at will. Slowly they began to leave the land for southern towns. With World War I they were attracted to northern industries and the volume of their migration became substantial. World War II enlarged it to a torrent flowing both North and West. The goal was not the land but the city. By 1960 a dozen American central cities, mostly outside the South, were populated by nonwhites, i.e. mostly by Negroes, from as high as 22 to 54 percent. Only two-fifths of all Negroes in the United States remained in the South.

With the separation of Negroes from the land came their release from the controls that southern planters had imposed in the later nineteenth century to replace the supreme control of slavery itself. It is in the cities, therefore, that Negroes have begun to face their status as freedmen, and to seek to transform it into that of free men. This is the sweep of history.

The present monograph deals with an intermediate phase of this long history, and contributes toward an understanding of the prolonged quiescence of post-emancipation Negro generations, and the retardation for a century of the open protest so conspicuous in urban black ghettos today.

Under slavery the capitalist's ownership of the person of the laborer had bound capital and labor together, with the voice of the capitalist decisive. After emancipation the relations between them were to be determined by contracts negotiated in the market place. Slave to Freedman describes this reconstitution of the relations between planter and laborer after emancipation.

This account relies upon records of the Freedmen's Bureau, the agency charged with bringing the change about, and upon articles and journals reflecting the views of planters who, while accepting the finality of the end of legal slavery, yet remained resistant to change. Records of the freedmen's own views are deficient. Nevertheless the main outlines of the changing labor relations emerge clearly from the sources available.

American experience prior to the Civil War offered three main alternatives to the master-slave relation between men on the land. One was the independent farmer tilling his own soil. This alternative was discussed in Congress and popularized at the time under the slogan "Forty acres and a mule." But it was never offered to the freedman except as he could achieve it on his own, and few could. A second alternative was wage labor. This was accepted widely, but also rejected widely, the more as time went on. A third alternative--sharing the crop between landowner and laborer--was chosen increasingly by those who had been masters as the arrangement best suited to preservation of their interests and control.

A vivid and detailed description of the elaborate pattern of this share-cropper system of labor relations, embracing free and slave labor alike as it existed at the close of the eighteenth century, is provided by William Tatham in An Historical and Practical Essay on the Culture and Commerce of Tobacco, published in London in 1800.¹ Because of its uniqueness and extraordinary clarity it is quoted here at length:

The crop master is generally the proprietor of the land which he cultivates, . . . who . . . gives instructions concerning the various operations, though perhaps he does not attend personally to their execution: he furnishes all the necessary provisions,

utensils, and apparatus: is lord of the soil, and receives a proportionate profit of its productions in kind, whether he tills the ground with his own negroes, with hireling labourers, or with independent cultivators, termed croppers. In any of these events, when the crop is gathered, he recovers his proportion of it in shares according to custom of the country. An idea of the customary arrangement may be conceived from the following example, which prevails in some places, but varies in others: If A (for instance) furnishes the land, and finds every thing necessary to its cultivation, and B undertakes the labour of the culture, A will share two parts, and B will share one. If, on the contrary, A finds the land only, and B furnishes the labour and necessaries of cultivation, A will share one third part, and B will take two. It follows from these proportions, that the rent of the land is valued at one-third of the whole produce; the furnishing of the provision and materials at one other third; and that the other one third part is to compensate for the manual labour bestowed. Now it is this labour which is divided among the labourers who perform it: as, for instance, a hand of medium capacity will perform one share of the aggregate labour; a hand of extraordinary capacity will perhaps perform a share and a quarter, or a share and a half of such labour; a woman will perform three quarters of a share; a boy half a share, &c. And in this way the shares are ultimately settled in, what is termed, dividing the crop.

Next, Tatham describes the hierarchy of management, including the participation of slaves in its lower echelons:

The overseer is a kind of subordinate steward (for upon large estates there is a steward who intervenes between the master and many overseers), who oversees and superintends the management of the crop, and is much, or altogether, with the hands during the hours of labour, which continue from day light until the dusk of the evening, and some part of the night, by moon or candlelight, during the winter. Overseers are generally white men of some experience and respectability; and there are some of the profession of high characters and good interest. There are, nevertheless, negroes upon many estates who rise by their merit to this degree of promotion; and there are generally upon large estates very trustworthy foremen among the negroes, who officiate in their overseer's absence, and save him much trouble by their management. It is remarkable, however, that black overseers are more severe task-masters than the white ones, and are more dreaded by their fellow-slaves. The employment of an overseer never ceases, from the seed to the harvest: he must be always and every where present (as it were), and should know every thing which passes till he has taken his crop to market. He is the responsible person for all transactions upon the estate, and his interest is generally interwoven in one common web with that of his employer, and of the labourers, to be ultimately

divided into shares; but there are, nevertheless, some exceptions where masters give their overseers a standing salary in lieu of their shares. An overseer partakes, in the ordinary case, of every species of crop which is cultivated, according to the rate of his agreement, which will perhaps extend to a share and a half, two, three, or more shares, according to his reputation, experience, and merit. And this compensation is seldom separated from the joint stock, but more generally sold in the aggregate, and accounted for by the employer upon settlement; yet this is a point which is optional with the overseer. In many cases the overseer is allowed to keep a horse or two of his own, a few hogs, cattle, &c., and these seldom shame their keeper, as they range at large upon free cost.

The laborers might be free as well as slave, although the latter were in the great majority. White laborers apparently were remunerated according to the same pattern of crop division as masters who rented out the services of the slaves.

The hands are most generally slaves belonging to the estate; and these in some instances are attached to it, and descend with the land to the next heir: in others they are considered personal property, according to the nature of the case, and the local regulations of the particular legislation. . . . The sons, however, of many planters work in the crop equally with the negroes, nor is there any material practical distinction observed between them. There are also white hirelings who cultivate tobacco, especially upon the footing of croppers, but these are more generally found among the Irish and German planters, than among the Virginians, and their fare is in common with the family.

Remuneration to the slave, as distinguished from share-crop payment to the master who rented out the labor of his slave, was upon a varying subsistence basis, more or less generous according to the circumstances.

Confining the idea of hands to negroes who compose the majority, their master is compensated for their labours in the crop, by an allowance of their proportionate shares. In return for this he generally furnishes them with coarse clothing; a negro quarter residence, or a private house of their own, if they choose to build one out of his materials; as much land as they think proper to cultivate at leisure hours, rent free; a regular allowance of corn and salt provisions, or salted fish; the privilege of cultivating cotton, melons, potatoes, vegetables, flax, hops, fruits, &c.; of rearing as many ducks, geese, dunghill fowls, and turkies, as they can manage; in some instances this indulgence is extended to a

small stock of swine; and I have known many slaves who kept their own horses, and lived comfortably and respectably upon the surplus of their time.

Finally William Tatham passed his own uncomfortable judgment upon the institution of slave labor as he had seen it practiced in the tobacco industry of Virginia.

It is true, indeed, that the policy of the law has invested the master with an absolute authority to tyrannize; but this is rarely exercised, and especially since the American revolution. There are, however, some whose avarice is found to stimulate them to acts of severity and penury, but such are justly abhorred, and the perpetrators of those cowardly cruelties are seldom without the penalty of their demerit, in the conspicuous contempt of their neighbours. When it is considered, indeed, from how many social cares and duties negro slavery is exempted; that the master is obliged to provide for them in all events; that prudence often elevates their circumstances above the industrious labourer of Europe; that the mitigated condition of their present shackles, renders the name of the thing more horrible than the restraint, it may (though not to be voluntarily sought after) be a more enviable situation, in the eye of sound philosophy, than the pompous bondage of the pageant great. At any rate, I have known negroes who have reasoned against emancipation; and have been credibly informed of others who have petitioned to return to their former slavery! Happily for myself, I neither am, nor ever shall be, a slave-holder.

The early twentieth century saw share-cropping reach its crest, with white croppers outnumbering Negroes by nearly three to one. The second half of this century has seen the decline of share-cropping to almost the vanishing point. In 1910 there were 373,551 colored croppers in the South and 1,026,372 white croppers. A decade later the former had increased greatly to 514,870 and the latter slightly to 1,163,942. Then came the change.

A generation later, in 1950, colored croppers had shrunk to 198,057 and whites to 148,708, their relative positions reversed. Mechanization of southern cotton, making laborers superfluous, was eliminating share-croppers at so rapid a rate--black and white alike--that by 1964 the Census Bureau thought it no longer worth while to count them for separate tabulation.

* * * * *

This monograph was conceived, and originally drafted, as a single phase of the long history of agricultural labor since 1607 in what is now the United States. Two others in this labor series appeared in 1943 and 1954, respectively. The first bore the title "American Hired Man: his rise and decline," and the second, "Plantation Laborer Before the Civil War."²

A number of writers have made useful contributions to an understanding of the change in southern agricultural labor relations after emancipation. In addition to those cited in footnotes to the text, some of these are listed below.³

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SLAVE TO FREEDMAN

Nothing renders society more restless than a social revolution but half accomplished. It naturally tends to develop its logical consequences, but is hindered by adverse agencies which work in another direction; nor can it return to the point from which it started. There are, then, continual vibrations and fluctuations between two opposites which keep society in the nervous uneasiness and excitement growing from the lingering strife between the antagonistic tendencies. All classes of society are intensely dissatisfied with things as they are. . . . The true nature of the difficulties of the situation is this: The general government of the republic has, by proclaiming the emancipation of the slaves, commenced a great social revolution in the south, but has, as yet, not completed it. Only the negative part of it is accomplished. The slaves are emancipated in point of form, but free labor has not yet been put in the place of slavery in point of fact.⁴

Let the laborer know that as soon as he is discharged, there is another ready and anxious to take his place, and a difficulty in his finding employment elsewhere, and there will be thrown upon him an influence calculated to check licentiousness and vice, and morally elevate him.

There will thus be inaugurated a counter revolution to that which has already overthrown southern society, by which the landed aristocracy will, in a measure, be reinstated to their position of independence and influence. We know that the point we here make, is at variance with the philosophy of the age, which flaunts with brazen effrontery, in the face of violated truth, the plebeian dogma of universal equality. But we nevertheless maintain that in every well regulated society, there must exist diversity of condition and distinction of castes. An elevated class, distinct yet not exclusive, especially when its distinctive features are based upon a landed proprietorship is the life and light of society. Without an intellectual and virtuous element in society, true liberty cannot be maintained. Such an element must be built upon the independence of circumstances, and freedom from the absorbing perplexities of common life.

Those whose intellects evolve and manners illustrate a pure philosophy and beautiful refinement, are the men whose condition in life places them above the necessity of drudgery. Such philosophy and refinement is not the creature of a day, but the fabric of many generations, and the accumulated work of those who were not born to toil.⁵

The freedmen were ill-prepared for emancipation. "Nine-tenths of the plantation negroes are living in a state of brutish ignorance, and have very little comprehension of the issues of this war, beyond the mere fact that they were set at liberty and set free," was the picture that Stephen Powers of the Cincinnati Commercial brought back from a visit to the Gulf States during the first winter after peace. "Four-fifths of the negroes in the South," he said, "have no just comprehension of the franchises and privileges of a free citizen."⁶

Slavery had not been established for the purpose of inculcating primitives from Africa with the qualities of free laborers. The plantation system did require some learning of the slaves; it insisted upon acquisition of a degree of industrial discipline by people unaccustomed to regular and organized work in the field. Even those of the first generation from Africa had been unaccustomed to such a discipline under a directing authority outside the family or tribal organization of which they themselves were a part.⁷ For this training and for the elements of general culture and the Christian religion which the slaves absorbed from southern whites, slavery had been defended as an "apprenticeship."

Contemporary with slavery were two other forms of agricultural labor--indentured service and hire for wages--which also prepared men for something to which they were unaccustomed. But these succeeded in preparing for independent labor, for self-employment as farmers. Throughout these "apprenticeships" the goal of independence loomed close ahead.

With slavery it was otherwise. Receiving only subsistence in return for labor, to learn to labor efficiently was no object to the slave. Without power to elevate his income or improve his status by his efforts, there was no stirring of new wants and of ambition to work to satisfy them. For the slave an easy adjustment to the requirements of his owners was sufficient, with as much leisure and only as little effort as might be necessary to achieve it. This was no "apprenticeship" to independent labor as a free man, and was not intended to be. The

original purpose of establishment of slavery in the colony of Virginia was as a device to deny to Negroes the opportunity which each term of indentured service had left open at its expiration. The duration of the period of assumed tutelage of the slave was for life. Whatever memories of freedom had been brought originally from their African culture, generations of slavery were able to obliterate. Slavery established and perpetuated a blind discipline, denied education, extinguished finally by law even the faint hope of freedom by manumission, and afforded no experience at all under a regime of free labor. As a committee of the South Carolina legislature reported in 1866, "The settled policy was to humble the slave and extinguish in him the pride of independence."⁸ Naturally the slaves were ill-prepared for their sudden emancipation.

The planters, like the freedmen, were ill-prepared to cope with the new situation. Emancipation had stripped them of their chief form of wealth. The Commissioner of Agriculture of Georgia, looking back ten years from 1875, described the condition in which war had left the planter, from the planter's viewpoint. In addition to destruction of physical property, he said, "the utter and complete revolution of the labor system of the State, and the consequent demoralization of labor, paralyzed the remaining capital. . . . The negro, yesterday a slave and efficient laborer--today a citizen and legislator, with the poison of suspicion and malice daily whispered in his ears, an ambitious, discontented politician, uncontrolled and uncontrollable--is the principal reliance for agricultural labor."⁹

The general unsettlement and confusion which prevailed when war ended and emancipation became effective was described by Major General Carl Schurz, refugee from the crushed German liberal revolt of 1848 and a commander in the Union armies, in his report to President Andrew Johnson.

When the war came to a close [wrote the general, who favored continued occupation of the South by Federal troops], the labor system of the south was already much disturbed. During the progress of military

operations large numbers of slaves had left their masters and followed the columns of our armies; others had taken refuge in our camps; many thousands had enlisted in the service of the national government. Extensive settlements of negroes had been formed along the seaboard and the banks of the Mississippi, under the supervision of army officers and treasury agents, and the government was feeding the colored refugees, who could not be advantageously employed, in the so-called contraband camps. Many slaves had also been removed by their masters, as our armies penetrated the country, either to Texas or to the interior of Georgia and Alabama. Thus a considerable portion of the laboring force had been withdrawn from its former employments. But a majority of the slaves remained on the plantations to which they belonged, especially in those parts of the country which were not troubled by the war, and where, consequently, the emancipation proclamation was not enforced by the military power. Although not ignorant of the stake they had in the result of the contest, the patient bondmen waited quietly for the development of things. But as soon as the tragic struggle was finally decided, and our forces were scattered about in detachments to occupy the country, the so far unmoved masses began to stir. The report went among them that their liberation was no longer a mere contingency, but a fixed fact. Large numbers of colored people left the plantations; many flocked to our military posts and camps to obtain certainty of their freedom, and others walked away merely for the purpose of leaving the places on which they had been held in slavery, and because they could now go with impunity. Still others, and their number was by no means inconsiderable, remained with their former masters and continued their work on the field, but under new and as yet unsettled conditions, and under the agitating influence of a feeling of restlessness. In some localities, however, where our troops had not yet penetrated and where no military post was within reach, planters endeavored and partially succeeded in maintaining between themselves and the negroes the relation of master and slave, partly by concealing from them the great changes that had taken place, and partly by terrorizing them into submission to their behests. But aside from these exceptions, the country found itself thrown into that confusion which is naturally inseparable from a change so great and so sudden.¹⁰

The war had settled one very important question affecting agricultural labor: slavery was at an end; laborers no longer were property, owned by masters. The South accepted this verdict and never challenged it. "All see that Slavery has ceased to exist," said a writer in DeBow's Review. "To say that there remains any respectable number of people . . . who believe that the institution of Slavery can be revived . . . is merely absurd."¹¹ But beyond the abolition of legalized slavery the South yielded unwillingly.¹²

Some Southerners sought to draw lessons from experience with emancipation in the West Indies. A writer in DeBow's Review, for example, stated that:

The primary condition of success with the Southern planter consists in a full appreciation of the altered relation of the negro laborer and a corresponding change of treatment. In this respect, the West India planters blundered most sadly. The managers of estates (for the proprietors were mostly absentees), forgetting that the negro was no longer a bondman, carried into their new sphere the habits of thought and action to which they had been accustomed, but of which the freedman was very naturally most impatient, and attempted to subject the latter to a system of discipline which the laws had made obsolete. Distrust and alienation were the inevitable consequence. The laborer in disgust abandoned his old home, and set up for himself. It is not without some degree of truth that a writer in the "Westminster Review," February, 1853, asserts, "The diminution of labor was the direct and immediate consequence of the mismanagement of the planters." Southern planters, it is to be hoped, will avoid this error.

The same writer perceived an important difference between the powers of management in the South and in the West Indies; in the South they possessed the leverage given them by ownership of all the land.

In our climate [he wrote], work is indispensable to existence. The negro must labor or starve. Hence the proprietor of land can present a controlling motive to overcome the native sluggishness of the African. Again, the British Government committed the fatal mistake of allowing the emancipated negroes to become owners of the soil. The wild lands were occupied by the freedmen; and cuffie settled down upon them in easy indolence, content to live upon pumpkins and whatever a bounteous nature might lavish at his feet. But here, the white man is the proprietor of the land. Cuffie must work for him, or try the experiment of living without work, with the privilege of starving. He is free to starve if he pleases.¹³

The plantation system rested on the labor of Negroes, and the planters were its organizers, administrators, and chief beneficiaries. Within the system ownership of slaves had been highly concentrated. In 1860 just under 11,000 slaveholders, or three percent, with an average of about 90 slaves each, held around one-quarter of all plantation slaves.¹⁴

With the end of slavery which was the legal instrument for holding the Negroes to their labors, they feared that the plantation system would not survive. With the plantation system threatened, the chief pillar

supporting the planters' preeminence in southern society was in jeopardy. Temporary loss of political status made their position worse. The Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture expressed the planters' views when he said, "The white man, yesterday the wealthy master, citizen and law-maker, born to command and control, is today the slave, disfranchised, impoverished, a foreigner in his native land, despondent in the present and hopeless for the future."¹⁵

In this frame of mind the planter class stated the problem as it saw it: "To retain in the hands of the whites the control and direction of social and political action, without impairing the content, or the labor capacity of the colored race."¹⁶ The planters' position was clear-cut: they would accept emancipation and at the same time insist on keeping freedmen in subordinate place as agricultural laborers.

This view was repeated over and over.

To remedy the evils growing out of the abolition of slavery it seems two things are necessary [said the ex-Confederate Major General Henry D. Clayton addressing the grand jury of Pike County, Alabama, in 1866]. First, a recognition of the freedom of the race as a fact, the enactment of just and humane laws, and the willing enforcement of them. Secondly, by treating them with perfect fairness and justice in our contracts, and in every way in which we may be brought in contact with them.

By the first we convince the world of our good faith, and get rid of the system of espionage [U.S. Freedmen's Bureau], by removing the pretext for its necessity; and by the second, we secure the services of the Negroes, teach them their places, and how to keep them, and convince them at last that we are indeed their best friends. . . . We need the labor of the Negro all over the country, and it is worth the effort to secure it. . . . Besides all this, which appeals to our interests, gentlemen, do we owe the Negro any grudge? . . . Shall it excite our animosity because he has been suddenly and without any effort on his part torn loose from the protection of a kind master? He is proud to call you Master yet . . .¹⁷

Ex-Secretary of the Confederate Treasury Memminger submitted a memorandum to President Andrew Johnson on September 4, 1865 with which he took great pains.

The Northern people seem generally to suppose that the simple emancipation from slavery will elevate the African to the condition of the white laboring classes; and that contracts and competition

will secure the proper distribution of labor. . . . They see, on the one hand, the owner of land, wanting laborers, and on the other, a multitude of landless laborers without employment; and they naturally conclude that the law of demand and supply will adjust the exchange in the same manner as it would do at the North. But they are not aware of the attending circumstances which will disappoint these calculations.

Memminger understood that Northerners wanted laborers to be free, and that they had confidence in the productiveness of laborers who were free. Planters, on the contrary, feared that the same degree of freedom to which northern labor was habituated would cause the breakdown of production if not the collapse of the plantation system itself.¹⁸ The ex-Secretary explained:

The laborer in the Southern States . . . occupies the houses of his employer, built upon plantations widely separate. The employment of a laborer involves the employment and support of his whole family. Should the employer be discontented with any laborers and desire to substitute others in their place, before he can effect that object, he must proceed to turn out the first with their entire families into the woods, so as to have houses for their successors. Then he must encounter the uncertainty and delay in procuring other laborers; and also the hostility of the laborers on his own plantation, which would probably exhibit itself in sympathy with the ejected families and combination against himself. Should this occur at any critical period of the crop, its entire loss would ensue. Nor would his prospect of relief from other plantations be hopeful. On them arrangements will have been made for the year, and the abstraction of laborers from them would result in new disorganization. The employer would thus be wholly at the mercy of the laborer.¹⁹

As it seemed natural to most Northerners to value freedom of laborers above the economic injury which its exercise might cause to employers, so it seemed natural to planters to place a higher value upon uninterrupted production from their plantations than upon raising Negroes to the full freedom enjoyed by whites. Indeed, the fact that the laws of northern states had not yet conferred full legal equality upon free persons of color gave planters support from an unexpected quarter for restating the old argument that the peculiar nature of Negroes justified investing them with a peculiar--and inferior--status. He would assume as premise and guide to policy, Memminger said, that "the Country then

seems prepared to assign to this race an inferior condition; but the precise nature of this condition is yet to be defined . . ."²⁰

The ex-Secretary proceeded then to propose a preliminary definition.

[As] the African is virtually in condition of youth, whose inexperience and want of skill unfit him for the privileges of manhood [he suggested that the Negro be] bound as an apprentice to be trained and directed, . . . under restraint until he is capable of discharging the duties of manhood. . . . Alongside of them are their former masters [he continued], fully capable of guiding and instructing them, needing their labor, and not yet alienated from them in feeling. The great point to be obtained is the generous application by the one of his superior skill and resources, and their kindly reception by the other. This can be effected only by some relation of acknowledged dependence. Let the untrained and incapable African be placed under indentures of apprenticeship to his former master, under such regulations as will secure both parties from wrong; and whenever the apprentice shall have obtained the habits and knowledge requisite for discharging the duties of a citizen, let him then be advanced from youth to manhood and be placed in the exercise of a citizen's rights, and the enjoyment of the privileges attending such a change . . .²¹

The perpetual apprenticeship of slavery thus was to be shortened, and brought within range of accomplishment, sometime. Here the issue was drawn. From northern points of view which were dominant at the close of the war this attitude of the planters simply was unacceptable. Northerners, many of them, were not "prepared to assign to this race an inferior condition." Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts wrote in 1865,

I insist that the rebel States shall not come back except on the footing of the Declaration of Independence, with all persons equal before the law and government founded on the consent of the governed.²² In other words, there shall be no discrimination on account of color.

Congressman Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania was unwilling to have the "precise condition" of the freedmen defined by the planters. In debate on the floor of the House during December 1865, he declared:

We have turned or are about to turn loose four million slaves without a hut to shelter them or a cent in their pockets. The diabolical laws of slavery have prevented them from acquiring an education, understanding the commonest laws of contract, or of managing the ordinary business of life. This Congress is bound to look after

them until they can take care of themselves. If we do not hedge them around with protecting laws, if we leave them to the legislation of their old masters, we had better have left them in bondage.²³

Richard Henry Dana, Jr., addressing a citizens' gathering two months after Appomattox, was less concerned with securing enactment by the South of "just and humane laws . . . to remedy the evils growing out of the abolition of slavery" than he was with taking steps to assure that every vestige of slavery should be rooted out of its laws. "Their statute books are full of slavery," he said. "It is the cornerstone of every rebel State. . . . There must, therefore, not merely be an emancipation of the actual, living slaves, but there must be an abolition of the slave system."²⁴

No wonder that the views of northern Radical Republicans on reconstitution of the relations between planters and freedmen did not meet those held by southern planters. The northern view emphasized freedom not simply as an end to be achieved, but also as the means by which freedmen could elevate their conditions toward actual equality of opportunity. If, in the exercise of freedom, production on the plantation should suffer some interruption, that fact, in the northern view, afforded no more justification for compromising the principle of freedom than interruption of the production of a factory by a laborers' strike.

The planters' view, on the contrary, regarded the organization and maintenance of production as paramount. This was never expressed more clearly than by a distinguished Mississippi scholar, Alfred H. Stone, who said many years later that those hostile to this view "ignore any discussion proper to the practical domain of a domestic economy in which the question of labor held the place of undisputed primacy, and invading with eloquent denunciation the altogether irrelevant fields of ethics and philanthropy, thunder on abstract questions of social and civil rights and wrongs."²⁵

Southern planters were obliged, of course, to grapple with specific problems in specific situations, and to explore alternatives. The New York Evening Post reported, for example, the experience of a Lower Mississippi planter:

. . . who after trying fairly last year the wages system upon a cotton plantation of several thousand acres, has come to the conclusion that a system of shares, or co-operation between the workmen and the capitalists, promises, if fairly administered, the best and most certain results to both. This system he has adopted the present year, and with satisfactory success so far. He gives each workman a house to live in, a garden and small field for his own tillage; he hauls the firewood and furnishes the food; this much represents the monthly wages; then he gives them one-fourth of the crop besides. The workmen and women are divided into gangs of twenty, each with a negro foreman, who is one of the twenty. This foreman reports to the general overseer the cases of absence or idleness, and an account being kept of these faults, the idlers or absentees lose at the end of the season a certain portion of their share of the cotton; but this share is divided among the remainder of the gang, so that there is no temptation for the capitalist to make wrong deductions. This plan, our informant reports, works well in every way.²⁶

A meeting of citizens in Summerville, Alabama, in 1868, adopted resolutions with concrete recommendations to put labor relations on a satisfactory footing, beginning with concerted action by employers, and premised on the proposition that "the interests of the whites and blacks are identical":

1st. Resolved, That concert of action is indispensable among those hiring laborers for the ensuing year.

2d. That every one hiring laborers should impress upon them the necessity of complying with the terms of their contract; and in the event of their failure to do so, they should be discharged.

3d. That as good citizens, and acting in good faith towards each other, we pledge ourselves not to employ any laborers discharged for a violation of contracts, without a certificate of recommendation from the person last employing them.

4th. That it is our duty and intention to act with perfect good faith toward the freedmen; to respect and uphold their newly acquired right, and to do all in our power to bring about that good feeling and harmony between employers and employes, which alone can insure united and successful action.

5th. That in hiring for a portion of the crop, we can not afford to give more than one-fourth and furnish the laborers their provisions; or one-third, they furnishing their own provisions; or one-half of the crop, they paying one-half of the current expenses in producing the same, and furnishing their own provisions.

6th. That we should adopt a schedule of prices equalizing the wages paid laborers; and that we recommend the following classification: for 1st class field hands \$10 per month; 2d class \$8 per month; 3d class \$6 per month.

7th. That ten hours be considered a day's labor, from 1st April to 1st October, and nine hours, from 1st October to 1st April.²⁷

The viewpoint of the freedmen was of little account in the contest over reconstruction. They were confused:

. . . in a state of great excitement and uncertainty. They could hardly believe that the liberty proclaimed was real and permanent. Many were afraid to remain on the same soil that they had tilled as slaves, lest by some trick they find themselves again in bondage.²⁸

A northern traveler in the South in 1866 added, it was "painfully certain that, next to teaching the whites that the Negro is a free man . . . the hardest work before the North now is to teach the Negro what constitutes his freedom."²⁹

Among those who sought to impress upon the freedmen a clearer sense of responsibility to perform labor, was Governor William W. Holden, of North Carolina. Addressing them he said:

. . . you are now free. It now remains for you, aided as you will be by the superior intelligence of the white people and cheered by the sympathies of all good people, to decide whether the freedom thus suddenly bestowed upon you will be a blessing to you or a source of injury. Your race has been depressed by your condition of slavery and by the legislation of your former masters for two hundred years. It is not to be expected that you can soon comprehend and appreciate as they should be comprehended and appreciated by a self-governing people, the wise provisions and limitations of the constitution and laws. . . . But you are free, in common with all our people, and you have the same right, regulated by law, that others have, to enter upon the pursuit of prosperity and happiness. . . . The same Providence that has bestowed freedom upon you, has told you that diligence in business is required of all His creatures, and you cannot expect that your race will escape ultimate extinction if you wilfully violate or disregard this, one of His great commandments. . . . I will see to it as far as I can, that you have your liberty; that you are protected in your property and person; and that you are paid your wages, but on the other hand, I will set my face against those of you who are idle and dissipated, and prompt punishment will be inflicted for any breach of the peace or violation of the law.³⁰

General O. O. Howard, instructing his Freedmen's Bureau staff to circulate the Emancipation Proclamation, included these admonitions:

That the freedmen be everywhere enjoined to work, and in doing so, they will, in all cases, enter into free and voluntary contracts with employers of their own choice. . . . In no case will freedmen be forced to work for employers who are obnoxious to them; . . . freedmen [are] to understand that they are entirely free to work where and for whom they please, and at the same time that a life of idleness will not be encouraged or allowed.³¹

Whatever influence the freedmen had was unorganized, and was exerted mainly through their willingness or unwillingness to accept and perform labor.

The Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau for Florida reported in 1866,

Most commonly, the freedmen know, from general reputation, the character of the neighboring planters--so that they are found with those whom they have chosen to labor for. Said one influential planter, "The Negroes have a kind of telegraph by which they know all about the treatment of the Negroes on the plantations for a great distance around." I judge they avail themselves of this knowledge in the choice of their employers. Indeed so certain and sudden is the retribution, that I found some large planters who were unable to employ a single laborer--their broad fields . . . doomed to be uncultivated . . . the present season--while others more favorably known, are able to obtain all the help, and more, than they can employ.³²

In the North the difficulty of understanding the planters' viewpoint was great, if not insuperable. Nevertheless a serious attempt was made. In 1866 Major Ben Truman submitted to President Johnson a report which is notable for its effort to clarify the issue to the North.

Almost the only key that furnishes a satisfactory solution to the southern question in its relation to the Negro . . . that gives a reasonable explanation to the treatment which he receives and the estimation in which he is held, is found in the fact--too often forgotten in considering this matter--that the people from their earliest days have regarded slavery as his proper estate, and emancipation as a bane to his happiness. That a vast majority of the southern people honestly entertain this opinion no one who travels among them for eight months can doubt.

To one who looks out from this stand-point of theory, and can see no other that is rational, the question presents itself in a different aspect. Everyone who conscientiously seeks to know the

whole truth should not ignore their beliefs while he censures the resulting practices. Holding that the Negro occupies a middle ground between the human race and the animal, they regard it as a real misfortune to him that he should be stripped of a protector, and that the immortal proclamation of President Lincoln was wicked, or at least mistaken, and a scourge to society. The persistency and honesty with which many even of the greatest men of the south, hold to this opinion, is almost unaccountable to a northern man, and is an element of such magnitude that it cannot well be omitted from the consideration.³³

To fully accept slavery as an "apprenticeship for life," as its defenders had characterized it, it had been necessary to deny the possibility of achievement by slaves of sufficient human potentialities within a lifetime to justify granting them freedom. "It was one of the most pernicious effects of slavery," continued the report, "that it confined the attention of the owner entirely to the present bodily condition of his slaves, and ignored all calculations upon his future mental or moral growth; it gave him that mean opinion of the Negroes' capacity that he still retains."

Here Major Truman came to the crux of his analysis. He wrote:

The planter reasoned only from the actual facts, and never from possibilities. . . . Inheriting his slaves, and finding them always brutish, stupid, and slow of understanding, he committed the logical inaccuracy of preventing them from ever becoming anything else, and proceeded to argue that they never could become so. To a certain extent, it is true, as has been forcibly said, that "those who have seen most of the Negro know least of him," though the assertion should be reduced to this--that they know far less of him as a human being than we of the north, but much more respecting his mere animal characteristics.³⁴

Disagreement went both to the means to be employed and to the ends to be sought. Planters opposed the Freedmen's Bureau, chosen by Radical Republicans to guide and assist freedmen "as a bridge to freedom." To the planters, the friction between freedmen and their employers appeared in the guise described by the Governor of Mississippi as "the evils that may arise from their sudden emancipation."³⁵ The means upon which planters wanted to rely was tutelage and control of freedmen by white planters.

As to ends, the southern planters disbelieved in either the possibility or the desirability of achieving equality of men "without discrimination on account of color"; improvement, yes, but they held to their beliefs in black inferiority and white supremacy.

This discrepancy between northern and southern viewpoints on desirable future ends, only increased the difficulty of compromise over present means. Northern Radical Republicans could not brook any present opposition, for it seemed to block the ultimate goal of freedom and equality. Southern planters could not tolerate measures to "protect" the freedmen, for these seemed to threaten that degree of present control over them which they regarded as so urgently necessary for an indefinite future.

In other words, the planters were conservative; impressed by existing conditions, they believed little improvement of Negroes was possible, and preferred to keep their relations with Negroes very much as they were. The Radical Republicans and the North generally were progressive, impressed by the potentialities of improvement of Negroes, and believed the changes freedom could bring were desirable, even if these upset labor relations with the planters.

Indeed, to change labor relations in the South was their goal. Therefore acceptance of war-borne emancipation, the beginning point of agreement between North and South, was also the end. Whether or not change was to be permitted ever to set a new balance between Negro laborers and white planters was the principle at issue, and that made also an issue of virtually every step proposed as a means to change, an issue to be disputed bitterly.

In the North were some, President Andrew Johnson among them, who relied more confidently on the normal operations of a free labor market to suffice for rectification of the freedman's accumulated disabilities. If accorded his civil rights in the courts, said the President in 1866:

. . . his condition is not as exposed as may at first be imagined. He is in a portion of the country where his labors cannot well be spared. Competition for his services . . . will enable him to command almost his own terms. He also possesses a perfect right

to change his abode, and if, therefore, he does not find in one community or State a mode of life suited to his desires or proper remuneration for his labor, he can move to another where that labor is more esteemed and better rewarded.³⁶

Closely akin to this confidence that, given their legal freedom, the natural interplay of labor demand and supply would solve the problem of the freedman's protection, was a belief held by some in the North that freedmen would readily acquire their own farms. It was thought that planters, in their economic distress produced by war and emancipation, generally would be obliged to break up their plantation holdings by sale to freedmen, who, with savings from wages, would be able to buy their way out of the market where they labored for others and rise into self-employment as independent farmers.

Some Southerners shared the view that plantations would be broken up by sale. DeBow himself wrote to Governor Perry of South Carolina "that the landed properties of the South have been, in general, too large, and that great benefit would result to the proprietors, by disposing, at low rates of the surplus . . ." But he was thinking not of freedmen, but of whites, as purchasers. Conceding that "climatic conditions, existing in many sections, are unfavorable to European and Northern American constitutions," he maintained that "by far the larger portion, of each of the Southern States is well adapted to white labor," and argued that "there is a territory, vast in extent, and susceptible of development by white labor, from whatever quarter introduced . . ."³⁷

Northern Radical Republican leaders were not content, at least for a time, to rely upon the optimistic view that matters would take care of themselves in either of these ways. Senator Sumner insisted, and Congress agreed, that a Freedmen's Bureau be established in order to place official friends within the South itself, whose duty it would be to protect the freedmen from ill-treatment and violation of their rights as free men.

Given this purpose, the Bureau intruded necessarily into this most intimate and unsupervised of ante-bellum relationships. Charged with replacing a relationship of command and obedience between owners

and their property, with a relationship founded upon contract to pay remuneration and to perform labor, the Bureau insisted that these contracts must be written, not oral. It inquired into the terms of the agreements themselves, using as a criterion of fair wages for freedmen the customary rental rates paid previously by masters to other masters for the use of their slave laborers. It helped to transport freedmen from areas of low wages to areas of higher wages. It frowned upon organized attempts by planters to hold wages down. It urged the freedmen to assume the economic responsibilities acquired with freedom by working faithfully.

The principles to govern agents of the Bureau in carrying out its purposes were set down in these words by the Commissioner, General O. O. Howard, in May, 1865:

The demands for labor are sufficient to afford employment to nearly if not quite all the able-bodied refugees and freedmen. It will be the object of all commissioners to introduce practicable systems of compensated labor; and to this end they will endeavor to remove the prejudices of their late masters unwilling to employ their former servants; to correct the false impressions sometimes entertained by the freedmen that they can live without labor, and to overcome that false pride which renders some of the refugees more willing to be supported in idleness than to support themselves. While a generous provision should be made for the aged, infirm, and sick, the able-bodied should be encouraged, and, if necessary, compelled to labor for their own support.

The circular which General Saxton issued to the freedmen of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, is illustrative of the manner in which the area assistant commissioners interpreted these instructions. He counselled:

Freedmen, let not a day pass ere you find some work for your hands to do, and do it with all your might. . . . Plough and plant, dig and hoe, cut and gather in the harvest. Let it be seen that where in slavery there was raised a blade of corn or a pound of cotton, in freedom there will be two. Be peaceful and honest. Falsehood and theft should not be found in freedom; they are the vices of slavery. Keep in good faith all your contracts and agreements, remembering always that you are a slave no longer. While guarding carefully your own rights, be as careful not to violate your neighbor's. "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

In cases where you feel that you have been wronged, it is neither wise nor expedient to take your redress into your own hands, but leave the matter to be settled by three impartial friends of both parties. In cases of difficulty between white men and yourselves, you should appeal to one of the agents of this bureau in your vicinity, who may appoint one referee, the other party one, and you should appoint a third, and the decision of the majority should be considered final. By this easy mode of settling difficulties much trouble may be avoided.

In slavery you only thought of today. Having nothing to hope for beyond the present, you did not think of the future, but, like the ox and horse, thought only of the food and work for the day. In freedom you must have an eye to the future, and have a plan and object in life.³⁹

To southern planters, as well as to northern Radical Republicans, the Freedmen's Bureau was symbol and instrument of the demand for erasure of all vestiges of the relations of master and slave. They were not slow to attack the Bureau; from Mississippi came the most vehement antagonism. Addressing the Legislature on November 20, 1865, the Governor declared:

To the guardian care of the Freedmen's Bureau has been intrusted the emancipated slaves. The civil law and the white man outside of the bureau have been deprived of all jurisdiction over them. Look around you and see the result. Idleness and vagrancy have been the result. Our rich and productive fields have been deserted for the filthy garrets and sickly cellars of our towns and cities. From producers they are converted into consumers, and, as winter approaches, their only salvation from starvation and want is federal rations, plunder, and pillage. Four years of cruel war, conducted on principles of vandalism disgraceful to the civilization of the age, were scarcely more blighting and destructive to the homes of the white man, and impoverishing and degrading to the negro, than has resulted in the last six or eight months from the administration of this black incubus. Many of the officers connected with that bureau are gentlemen of honor and integrity, but they seem incapable of protecting the rights and property of the white man against the villanies of the vile and villanous with whom they are associated.

How long this hideous curse, permitted of Heaven, is to be allowed to rule and ruin our unhappy people, I regret it is not in my power to give any assurance.⁴⁰

Doubtless the activities of Bureau agents at times did not measure up to their instructions, and they were guilty of abuses. The southern historian Fleming has summarized some of the common charges. He wrote:

In the later years of the Bureau distribution of rations was used as a means of organizing a black political party. . . . The labor regulations were, as a rule, good in theory, but absurd in practice and the planters were forced to neglect or evade them, or cease to plant. The Bureau finally stopped trying to regulate labor.

. . . The abuses in the administration of justice were flagrant, and the petty oppressive practices made the Bureau hated by the whites. The negroes, as often as the whites, were cheated and blackmailed by the agents, who were often purchased by the planters.⁴¹

Whatever assistance the planters found the Bureau to be in urging freedmen to work, and of this result there is evidence, nevertheless, they did not welcome its activities. The inspector-general, after traveling about Texas with the agent in charge, holding meetings of freedmen and planters, was well impressed with the agents' work, but in recognition of the deep gulf in attitude between planters and Northerners that survived acceptance of emancipation, he added this comment to his January 1, 1866 report: "I do not think it possible for a man to hold General Gregory's position in Texas--do justice to the freedmen and be popular with the people."⁴² Planter opposition to the Bureau was founded on its aims at least as much as on its abuses.

On the whole, southern planters accepted emancipation with less resentment toward freedmen than did the poorer whites who had not owned slaves. Generally the planters were not parties to terrorism and violence against freedmen, at least until issues of white political control arose later. While they might be the immediate economic beneficiaries of rough measures conducive to a subservient attitude among their laborers, they seldom participated, and upon occasion even protected Negroes against them. Reporting to President Johnson in 1866, Major Benjamin C. Truman wrote:

It is the former slave-owners who are the best friends the Negro has in the south--those who, heretofore, have provided for his mere physical comfort, generally with sufficient means, though entirely neglecting his better nature, while it is the "poor whites" that are his enemies. It is from these he suffers most. In a state of slavery they hated him; and now that he is free, there is no striking abatement of this sentiment, and the former master no longer feels called by the instincts of interest to extend that protection that once he did. On the streets, by the roadside, in

his wretched hut, in the field of labor--everywhere, the inoffensive Negro is exposed to their petty and contemptible persecutions; while, on the other hand, I have known instances where the respectable, substantial people of a community have united together to keep guard over a house in which the Negroes were taking their amusement, and from which, a few nights before, they had been rudely driven by white vagabonds, who found pleasure in their fright and suffering.⁴³

The poorer whites regarded the freedmen as competitors. The planters wanted the freedmen to continue to serve them as laborers.⁴⁴

The insistence of planters that the capacities of Negroes limited them to the rendering of service, so Major Truman's report pointed out, did not preclude "a real attachment between master and slave" strong enough "especially between the family and house servants" to survive emancipation. But it does help to explain the course taken during reconstruction of relations between planters and freedmen, and especially how difficult it was for southern white employers to readjust their attitudes suddenly to the war-borne fact of emancipation.

They were steeped in a conviction not only of the necessity for African slavery but of its righteousness. The cultivation of the defenses of slavery in every realm of the mind--philosophical, historical, scientific, moral, and religious--had gone on with vigor during the generation of abolition agitation in the North. Incontrovertibly, there was the contemporary gulf in education, cultural achievement, and sense of economic responsibility between whites and Negroes, as classes of the southern population. However much men might deny that such disparity was permanently inevitable or lay blame on the planters for maintaining and bulwarking Negro inferiority, existence of that disparity was an inescapable fact giving reassurance to the planters.

In 1865 the planters could read in their agricultural journal, the Southern Cultivator, or in the Cornfield Press from which it was borrowed, a vulgar pronouncement in this vein, under the title "Free nigger." It declared:

A free nigger is a monstrosity, . . . a Hounyhyn, a hand without muscles, a glass eyeball, and a shin-plaster--uncurrent at that. In a word he is a tender without any locomotive; fuel, coals, for example, without any machinery. A nigger without any master is

latent power off the track. Put him off by himself, you can get him along only by pushing so constant and severe, that it costs more than it comes to. Tackle him to an engine, in the shape of a white man, and the long train laden with industrial products goes with a rush. The locomotive displays itself to advantage, and the black tender follows, and keeps close up behind in a blaze of dust and glory.⁴⁵

Gentler in tone is a wag's parody of verses from Edgar Allen Poe:

Negro, said I, horrid demon--negro still, if slave or freedman--
Think again before you answer this one question, I implore.
Have you yet no sense of feeling--do you mean to live by stealing,
Or by working and fair dealing--tell me, tell me, I implore;
On your honor, as a negro, will you labor as before?
Quoth the negro, "Nevermore."⁴⁶

So reconstruction was bound to pass through the throes of great conflicts--conflict between North and South, conflict between Radical Republicans and the Republican President, conflict between blacks and whites as groups inhabiting the same southern area, conflict between planters and their laborers. Our concern is with the last phase of this turbulence--the readjustment of the status of those who continued to sweat in the fields and of the men who continued to direct their labors.

The confusion among freedmen attendant upon emancipation was heightened by hopes of receiving land for farms, hopes that proved to be false. Once the freedmen came to realize, around Christmas time 1865, that they were not to be given farms, they began to seek other adjustments in earnest. Stephen Powers wrote:

I think I have never known of any more complete industrial and social revolution than was accomplished during those holidays. . . . Up to that time the negroes had been thriftless, gay, improvident, and relying upon what they confidently expected, the division of their old master's property at that time. They were, however, sorely disappointed, and for a time were discouraged and desponding. But they very soon recovered, however, in consequence of their natural buoyancy, and have applied themselves to work for themselves and their families with a great degree of industry. They have by this time a pretty thorough understanding that it is necessary for them to provide for themselves, and they are setting about it in a rude, ignorant way, which is all that could have been expected of them.⁴⁷

Planters were convinced nevertheless that simple freedom for their laborers would not be tolerable to themselves. It seemed too much to expect that Negroes would any longer put forth their labors, since emancipation had removed fear of the punishments permissible under slavery. "As a general rule the world over, in freedom or in bondage," the Southern Cultivator declared, "labor can be extracted from the Negro only by compulsion."⁴⁸ The Shreveport News was only slightly more optimistic. "Some of the negroes will work as well as ever" it said; "in truth they must be made to work, if they refuse to go at it voluntarily, for people cannot be supported without work . . ."⁴⁹

In Alabama the head of the Freedmen's Bureau stated the simple northern confidence in free labor. He told the legislature in 1866:

It has all the while been my opinion . . . that the freedmen would be found to be best governed by the same measures as are most effectual with ourselves, and only injured by artificial regulations. The true incentives to labor in the free States are hunger and cold.

But the difficulty in understanding between the North and South was mutual, and planters were not prepared to believe that hunger and cold could be sufficient incentives for Negroes to labor in the South. When Northerners talked about security of labor they meant one thing--the laborer's security. Thus General Swayne explained in Alabama that:

The true security of labor, also in the free states, is that whenever the laborer finds himself ill-treated, or his wages insufficient or unsafe, he can quit without having to account to anybody. This is more and better than all the laws.⁵⁰

To planters, security of labor meant assurance that they would have laborers.

The planters wanted to continue the plantation system, not to see the freedmen set up with forty acres and a mule. This desire drove the planters to seek compulsion of labor after emancipation of labor, just as the desire to make secure the labor supply on the plantations of early Virginia had caused original imposition of slavery. Whether the new compulsion was to be achieved by laws, by flooding the labor supply with competing immigrant laborers, by combinations of planters to exert

their powers over labor in concert, by discouraging sale or lease of farmland to freedmen in order to throw them onto the labor market, by encouraging use of machinery or planting land to crops requiring little labor in order to increase the supply of labor relative to demand, or by all of these methods together, the planters never lost sight of their immediate goal which was to regain the control over their labor which emancipation had broken.

Planters recognized that contract between employer and employee imposed obligations upon both parties, but it was only nonperformance by the freedmen of which they were apprehensive. Ex-Secretary Memminger wrote:

It may be asked why the laborer is more likely to fail in the performance of his contract than his employer. The reasons are obvious. The employer by the possession of property affords a guarantee by which the law can compel his performance. The laborer can offer no such guarantee, and nothing is left to control him but a sense of the obligation of the contract. . . . It would be vain, under any circumstances, to count upon such performance from an ignorant and uneducated population. But where that population is from constitution or habit peculiarly subject to the vices of an inferior race, nothing short of years of education and training can bring about that state of moral rectitude and habitual self-constraint which would secure the regular performance of contracts. 51

Planters gave ample assurances of their firm belief that their plan for the freedman was to his own best interest. Yet their public statements could leave no doubt with anyone that their own interests were controlling. An article published by the Southern Cultivator shortly after conclusion of hostilities under title of "Facts and Predictions" explained:

Though we think our own race would have been quite as prosperous without the negro in our midst, yet we believe that with the race among us, their being placed in just that subordinate position they held, was most beneficial to each party. Both were happy in the relation in proportion to their virtue, morality and good feeling; but the relation was most advantageous to the negro, to whom it was most fortunate, with his childish intellect and deficient foresight, to be placed in a condition where he had a right to receive light, direction and guidance, from a race endowed with finer moral perceptions--with more sagacity and intellectual power. . . .

Inexorable fanaticism has destroyed the institution of slavery. Blind alike to the barbarism of the negro elsewhere, and to his comparatively improved and improving condition among us. . . . No longer protected by his subordinate position, he will now feel for the first time, that to him, as to every other people, contact and contiguity with a race superior in intellect and energy, is a slow, sure poison, before which, day by day, he will melt away. . . . His future course is downward. . . .

Now there are no persons so directly interested in preventing this state of affairs, as the Southern people. If there is any mode by which the personal freedom of the negro can be secured, and their labor and former usefulness retained, we will most gladly welcome it.

This--to retain their "labor and former usefulness"--was the iron-bound condition with which planters intended to keep the new freedom in tether.

The planters were quick to assure the reader that this circumscription of liberty meant no lack of human sympathy.

We feel more real kindness to the negro, than all the "philanthropists" in the world, and the negro knows it [continued the article in the Southern Cultivator]. But, unfortunately, he is not a white man, and cannot live in competition with him. His only position, in which existence is possible, is to place him in some way that he must labor and that his labor can be controlled and depended upon. The country needs such labor as will not, at a critical period of the crops, totally fail. We need still more to be able to enjoy in security, the products of our skill and foresight, and not lie at the mercy of a race of pilfering savages now wholly uncontrolled; and unless these two ends can be again secured, either the negro⁵² or the white man will be compelled to leave these States. . . .

In this frame of mind, southern leaders set themselves to establish laws and practices which would continue their control over the labor of the freedmen. In state after state they enacted laws and ordinances which came to be called the "Black Codes."

Mississippi, under the urging of her governor to guard against the "evils that may arise from the sudden emancipation," enacted laws denying Negroes the right to rent farms; requiring that each year on the second Monday of January every Negro must have a lawful home or employment, under penalty of punishment as a vagrant; providing that every freedman quitting the service of his employer without good cause must forfeit wages for that year up to the time of quitting; providing

for return of deserting laborers; forbidding enticement of laborers away from their employment before expiration of their term of service. Compulsory apprenticeship for minors whose parents were unable to support them was included in the codes enacted by some states, with a preference prescribed, if the apprentice was the "child of a freedman," for binding him to "the former owner."

Mississippi prescribed fines for enticing freedmen beyond the borders of the state, or for providing any "deserting freedmen" with food or raiment. South Carolina singled out freedmen to charge them license-fees when they sought employment outside of agricultural labor. Each state in its own way imposed special restrictions upon them. Even local governments joined in the passing of ordinances designed to compel freedmen to work. Thus the police board of Opelousas, Louisiana, decreed that no Negro or freedman could reside in town unless he was "in the regular service of some white person or former owner."⁵³

Opinion of the necessity for enactment of the Black Codes has shown variations as wide as on every reconstruction issue. Carl Schurz found corroboration in these codes for the opinion he held even before making his trip of inspection for the President, that federal intervention in the affairs of the South must continue. The Opelousas ordinances he regarded as "a striking embodiment of the idea that although the former owner has lost his individual right of property in the former slave, 'the blacks at large belong to the whites at large.'"⁵⁴

Senator James G. Blaine of Maine condemned the codes as "schemes to re-enslave the Negroes." Citing an Alabama statute under which "stubborn and refractory servants" and "servants who loiter away their time" could be declared vagrants, fined \$50, and in default of payment hired out to private persons for six months, he charged:

No fair man could fail to see that the whole effect, and presumably the direct intent, of this law was to reduce the helpless negro to slavery for half the year--a punishment that could be repeated whenever desired, a punishment sure to be desired for that portion of each recurring year when his labor was specially valuable in connection with the cotton crop, while for the remainder of the time he

might shift for himself. By this detestable process the "master" had the labor of the "servant" for a mere pittance; and even that pittance did not go to the servant, but was paid into the treasury of the county, and thus relieved the white men from their proper share of taxation. There may have been more cruel laws enacted, but the statute-books of the world might be searched in vain for one of meaner injustice.⁵⁵

On the floor of the House of Representatives Thaddeus Stevens poured out some of his most impassioned eloquence.

If this Republic is not now made to stand on solid principle, it has no honest foundation, and the Father of all men will still shake it to its centre. If we have not yet been sufficiently scourged for our national sin to teach us to do justice to all God's creatures, without distinction of race or color, we must expect the still more heavy vengeance of an offended Father, still increasing his afflictions, as he increased the severity of the plagues of Egypt until the tyrant consented to do justice, and when that tyrant repented of his reluctant consent and attempted to re-enslave the people, as our Southern tyrants are attempting to do now, he filled the Red Sea with broken chariots and drowned horses, and strewn the shores with the corpses of men. Sir, this doctrine of a white man's Government is as atrocious as the infamous sentiment that damned the late Chief Justice to everlasting fame, and I fear to everlasting fire.⁵⁶

Suspended immediately by the Freedmen's Bureau, the Black Codes never took legal effect, but they stood on the books as evidence of their authors' intentions. The horror with which the codes were greeted in the North threw even the moderates to the support of the Radicals' program.

Among Radical Republicans of the North some were confirmed in their belief that termination of slavery was not by itself enough to establish a full-fledged system of free labor in the South. They were convinced that additional national pressure was essential to achieve at least two additional measures of protection. Therefore, in order to provide freedmen with opportunity for self-employment as an alternative to employment as wage or sharecrop laborers on the plantations, they proposed the break-up of great plantations and creation of farms worked by their owners in their stead.

As early as 1864 Congressman Julian of Indiana sought to extend the Homestead Act to confiscated southern lands with preference to men

in military service, including colored laborers in the army. "The maxim of the slaveholder that 'capital should own labor' will be as frightfully exemplified under the system of wages slavery, the child of land monopoly, as under the system of chattel slavery . . ." he warned the House. "African slavery may not exist in name, but the few will practically control the fortunes of the many, irrespective of color or race."⁵⁷ His bill passed the House but died in the Senate.

In August 1865 an editorial by William Lloyd Garrison in the National Anti-Slavery Standard called for confiscation of plantations, leaving a portion to the slaveholder, and settling Negro families on forty acres each. The purpose was to prevent the planter from using "his influence over his former slaves to induce them to work for low wages, which will probably be the case quite generally on the black plantations."⁵⁸ The next month Thaddeus Stevens demanded confiscation of the estates of rebels above 200 acres in size and distribution of the land to freedmen or its sale to pay the national debt.⁵⁹ The Radical program for land reform in the South, however, never was made into law.

The second effort made by the Radical Republicans was to arm the freedmen with the right of suffrage for their own protection. "If all whites vote, then must all blacks," said Senator Sumner; "but there shall be no limitation of suffrage for one more than the other."⁶⁰ "Equality, they believed, could neither be conferred nor maintained unless the Negro were invested with the badge of American manhood--the right to vote . . ." wrote Blaine of the purpose of this determined group.

Motives of the Radical Republicans were mixed, as political motives usually are. They wanted a full measure of freedom for the former slaves, and they hoped as well to build an alliance with voting freedmen and enough southern whites to assure continuance of their own party power in Congress.

Nothing aroused southern hostility to its very depths more than the effort to assure freedmen the right of suffrage. This was not only because of its purpose--to alter their status by affording them an instru-

ment of self-protection--but also because the drive for Negro suffrage was conducted while many whites who had supported the Confederacy remained disfranchised. It became the focus of bitter factional fighting-- in Congress, between Congress and the President, and between North and South. In the South it fed the flames which flared into sporadic violence and spurred organization of the Ku Klux Klan. Although the right of Negroes to vote was imbedded finally into the Constitution as the Fifteenth Amendment, the effort to secure its observance was brought to ultimate defeat by the vigor and persistence of southern opposition.

Whether with more prompt and statesmanlike handling by the North the objectives of the Radical Republicans might have attained for the ex-slaves the full freedom which they sought, and at the same time have avoided crystallization of enduring hostility, is an interesting speculation. But of more importance now than possibilities already passed are the realities which this conflict created. The failure of the Radical Republicans to carry through their program left the freedmen with neither land nor the political equipment of free men for their own protection. And during the struggle to attain the northern program, southern whites forged an iron determination to reestablish and maintain what emancipation had loosened, namely, their strong controls over Negro laborers.

Planters, like Radical Republicans, understood the close relation between control over labor and control over politics. The Governor of Florida made it very plain that the public authority was invoked under special enactments for the purpose of holding agricultural laborers to the specific performance of their private contracts to labor. He said:

It is all important to the successful cultivation of corn and cotton that the planter should be able to rely at all times upon having a sufficient number of hands in his service to make and gather the crop. He must hire his laborers by the year, and it seems to me that in the present condition of the laboring force of this country, it is all-important to the interest of the country that he should have some security that the laborer will not leave his employment at a time when his services are most needed. The ordinary remedies known to the common law for the non-performance of a contract to labor afford him no security,

for the laborer, as a general thing, has no goods or chattels, land or tenements, to levy upon under an execution.⁶¹

The planters also watched attentively the course of the fight over reconstruction in Washington where their future was being decided. In 1869 the Southern Cultivator published a letter from South Carolina under the title "What is the proper labor for the South?"

Let us arrange and adjust the principles of right and justice [said the writer]. The relations that ought to and must obtain between the white man, the capitalist, and the Negro, the proper, legitimate, and divinely ordained laborers of the South. Let us gain his confidence and affection, not as our social equal, but as the inferior of the superior race--as the weak to the strong--to whom he must look for protection. Let us teach him that his power lies in his muscles, and that the proper field for its exercise is in the cotton fields of the South.

Then, with an eye to the turn which events in Washington were taking, with the Radical Republicans losing out, he said,

Do we fear the political power of the Negro? Can we apprehend seriously that he is to have the control of the Government of the Southern States, and keep it for any considerable time? Shall we repudiate him in his true capacity as a field laborer from such considerations? We apprehend that no man who has watched the current of events for the last six months, will doubt for a moment that the white men of the South will control the Government of the Southern States for the future. This is a white man's Government, and white men will govern.⁶²

Whether the planters, who had lost the particular security for the performance of labor with which slavery had provided them, were "justified" under freedom in seeking security through these lesser means of compulsion has been a matter of some debate among historians. William A. Dunning saw the worst, if not only serious fault of the codes in the fact that their enactment strengthened the hands of the Sumner-Stevens Radical Republican forces in Congress; otherwise, Dunning said, the codes were "a conscientious and straightforward attempt to bring some sort of order out of the social and economic chaos . . . faithful on the whole to the actual conditions with which it had to deal."⁶³ In the same temper the northern historian, Howard Beale, has written that:

Vicious slave-holders there were who purposed to retain the old system under new names. The Black Codes were partly the work of these men, but they were primarily honest attempts to eliminate lawlessness and save the economic situation by forcing the negro to work. . . . In view of the perplexity of the southern negro problem the Black Codes were explicable, justifiable.⁶⁴

Some northern states, it is true, had on their own books during the same period vagrancy and apprenticeship statues which resembled strongly those which the Black Codes applied to freedmen. Nor did the northern states accord uniformly the full rights and privileges of citizenship to free Negroes prior to the Emancipation Proclamation. Even white laboring men were not free of legal compulsions to labor under some circumstances. The offense of desertion for leaving ships in safe harbor remained part of maritime law and was applied with sanction of the Supreme Court until the close of the nineteenth century to compel merchant seamen to serve out their contracts.

These contemporary facts naturally and properly temper moral and political judgments upon those who enacted the codes, but they do not obscure their primary intention which was to compel the freedmen to work for the planters. As a recent historian, Kenneth Stampp, concluded, "To put it bluntly, the Black Codes placed the Negro in a kind of twilight zone between slavery and freedom."⁶⁵ The plantation system was continuing to exert pressure to compel the freedmen to labor just as it had exerted pressure from its beginning in seventeenth century Virginia; and the planters were strong enough politically to enact laws to support this renewal of coercion of the laborer which seemed to them so unanswerably necessary and desirable.

Southern planters saw no inconsistency between freedom and their efforts to coerce the labor of the freedman. Indeed, they portrayed the Negroes as equal if not principal beneficiaries of these efforts. In 1867 the Southern Cultivator published an address on "Labor for the South" which declared:

It is our best policy--to say nothing of duty and humanity--to give intelligent and systematic direction to their labor and to save them, so far as is possible, from crime or destitution--it is

our duty, as the superior race, to educate and direct them in such ways as will ensure the greatest benefit and advantage to them as well as to ourselves, and through both to the world at large. We must cheerfully recognize all their rights and privileges under the law; recollecting, however, that he who passes suddenly and at a single step from the slave to the freeman, may as rapidly pass from the freeman to the ruffian; and that the obligations of truth and honor are little understood or regarded by such people. We must make due allowance for these circumstances, and insist upon the passage of such laws as will compel the faithful and steady discharge of all labor contracts and obligations on the part of the laborer, no less than justice, kindness and honesty on the part of the employer.⁶⁶

During reconstruction the heat of national debate reached down to the southern plantations; the debate in Washington was watched intently from afar, and its course, visible from the ground, helped to chart the relations of planters and freedmen in the South. Our concern with labor in agriculture is more with developments close to the ground than with those at the national political level, even when the status of agricultural laborers was carried up to the national arena as a central issue of war and peace.

The foundation of work relations between planters and freedmen, it cannot be repeated too often, was changed by emancipation from property to contract. No longer could the planter simply tell his property what to do, and give in return whatever he chose. Under freedom the planter was obliged to make a contract with his laborer; its terms must prescribe what work was to be done and under what conditions, and they must stipulate what compensation the laborer was to receive in return.

Confronted with the necessity of conceding these formal, legal changes, planters proceeded at once to make specific arrangements with freedmen to perform labor in the growing of cotton and other plantation crops. These arrangements, infinite in the variety of their detail, quickly revealed three principal types of contract: (1) renting land to tenants for a specified sum of money per acre, called cash rental, or a specified number of pounds of lint cotton per acre, called standing rent; (2) compensating labor with a specified part of the crop, called share-cropping; (3) paying money wages.⁶⁷

Many freedmen preferred to establish themselves as tenants. It seemed a natural, if not the only way to achieve the full fruits of emancipation, since slavery had left them without money to buy land, and the government which freed them had failed to provide forty acres and a mule. "The Negroes of Georgia," wrote a correspondent to the Southern Cultivator in 1867, "will almost starve and go naked before they will work for a white man if they can get a patch of ground to live on, and get from under his control."⁶⁸ In Mississippi and Louisiana, declared a letter published in 1869 in the Southern Cultivator, "there is an increasing disposition, on the part of this people, to become landholders and tenants, and not hirelings, seeming to be anxious to rid themselves of all supervision on the part of the white race, and to look upon it as a sort of continued badge, or remembrancer, of their former condition of servitude."⁶⁹

Renting land to freedmen as tenants also held attractions to landowners, and for reasons similar to those which appealed to the freedmen. If it meant freedom from control for the one, it seemed to promise freedom from the constant responsibilities and frictions of overseeing for the other. Besides, it might mean larger profits and a contented tenantry of small farmers.

Take your landed estate of 1,000 acres (more or less) [urged a correspondent who painted this rosy prospect in the columns of the Southern Cultivator in 1867], and set off, first, 200 acres for the family homestead, then divide the remaining 800 acres into 20 forty-acre farms, to be leased out to 20 families of freedmen--a man and wife and his little children. Put upon each at your earliest convenience, a comfortable little house, smoke house, manure lot, corncrib, stables and little garden lot; each farm to contain 20 acres of good arable land, or land that this system will soon make good, 4 to 5 acres for houses, manure lot, garden, and small orchard for fruit, and 15 acres for wood land. Lease them thus for a term of years, with the fixed condition, that this improved system be practiced to the letter, in every department of each small farm; then you will find yourself at once relieved of all the cruel vexations of overseers and personal overseeing yourself. At the expiration of five years, your real estate will have increased in value 100 percent--more clear cash in your pocket, and your small farms improving in fertility, under the heavy and abundant crops of each succeeding year--your freedmen-tenants happy and content, growing in intelligence and good citizenship.⁷⁰

The Southern Cultivator itself, however, and most of those whose letters it published, were at least dubious of this advice. It regarded renting as the "poorest" of the arrangements which a landowner could make, and carried vehement attacks upon it by correspondents.

It is really unpleasant to come in contact with such a class [as the freedmen], under any circumstances, but it becomes humiliating and obnoxious when he is received on the farm as a co-partner [wrote a correspondent in 1870]. This relationship has a tendency to degrade the employer, and has presented many serious drawbacks to southern agriculture, and instead of elevating Cuffee, as someone has remarked, it has made a compound fool of him. It encourages idleness and all the bad traits . . . and they are growing on him day by day. Under this hallowed co-partnership our homes and farms too are going to ruin.⁷¹

A further criticism of the practice of renting land to Negro tenants was that it made them competing cotton growers,⁶ and at the same time removed them from the planter's labor supply. A correspondent of the Southern Cultivator who advanced this objection in 1869 felt that the desire of Negro freedmen to find self-employment on farms was an unnatural distortion, either fomented by insidious influences in the North or the manifestation of inherent defects in the race; also it might portend displacement of the planter himself.

Whether this be the result of their loyal league teaching, or of a native disposition to avoid all manner of persistent, physical effort, outside that required to eke out a bare subsistence, it is difficult to say [said the writer]; but if the Southern landholders are basing their calculations upon the free negro for supplying, in the future, a sufficiency of labor to cultivate their plantations, they are cherishing a fatal delusion. The consequence will be that, in no long time, these thriftless blacks will become the cotton growers of the South, leaving the planter no alternative but to sell or rent his land to them.⁷²

A correspondent of the Southern Cultivator in 1884, in reviewing his objections to Negro tenancy, included observations on both Negro tenants and those white merchants who furnished them with credit.

Tenants, as a class, are not ambitious. . . . The main object is to avoid faithful labor, to gain spare time. . . . If he controls his own time he cares little who has the profits of that time. He is exceedingly fond of trading, and it is simply wonderful how much of it he can do on credit, with so little capital of any kind.

The consequence of this is that he plants too largely of what merchants wish to buy at their price, and always needs much of what merchants wish to sell at their price. . . . The legitimate farmer, working with his own capital, is placed at a great disadvantage. For when he carries ten bales of cotton to market he meets a hundred bales which have been grown without any regard to the demands of the market. And although he may employ better methods, produce better cotton, and more of it per acre, still the market is so glutted with the illegitimate produce that he cannot realize more than cost, and sometimes not that much. I say "illegitimate produce," because I think cotton grown at the expense of the land and the expense of poor mules that have to live in winter in the canebrakes or in their neighbors grain fields, is illegitimate.

During the first two months of the year there is a surplus of day labor, and the farmer can hire hands at his own price, not because there is nothing they could do at home, but because they have nothing to eat. When "creddick," as they say, opens, the scene changes, and labor is in great demand. So from the first of March the business of the country is under the control of merchants. This condition of things is bad for the tenant, bad for the landlord, and worse for the merchants. I may be asked then why the landlords and merchants continue such business. We have seen that the tenant does it for want of sense. The merchant and the landlord continues it from laziness. The landlord wishes to put the work and risk of farming on some one else, and live a life of ease. The merchants instead of doing a lively active business for cash, at small profits (but a better and more profitable business in the end), prefers to sit in a chair, and has a porter to serve his customers, who are bound to him by mortgage, and cannot trade elsewhere.⁷³

A sure touchstone of the planters' reaction to a labor arrangement was whether or not it afforded them sufficient control. Measured by this, renting to Negroes was unsatisfactory, and objections on this ground persisted. In 1878 the transactions of the Georgia Agricultural Society carried this attack:

Another plan the country is groaning heavily under is that of giving the entire management of the farm into their hands for standing rent. Being so recently set at liberty, they conceive the idea that freedom consists in idleness. Hence, they are utterly averse to anything like advice--say nothing of control--and are unwilling to work any other way in future. And under their botched system, the rent will not pay the farmer for the injury done to the land.⁷⁴

Similarly a letter to the Southern Cultivator in 1885 castigated landowners bitterly who rented to Negroes, charging that in certain areas the:

. . . landowners have but very little control over the laborers on their farms; they run entirely on the negro tenant system, and they generally are willing to put up with any system of farming that is practiced by their tenants, even at the death of the land, in order to get their lands cultivated so they can get their rents. They submit to every sort of terms dictated by the set of profligate, indolent, and non-progressive people, in order to get some sort of a living out of their feeble efforts to farm, rather than be master of their own farms and take any progressive plan of action in order to wrench the lands from such a system of negro butchery, and endeavor to improve them and leave them as a worthy inheritance to their children. We notice further [charged the correspondent], that in such counties, every man who desires his children educated, and given the benefit of good society, has left, or is anxious to leave, for other sections where the negro is better controlled, and not allowed to be master of the situation.⁷⁵

Slavery had failed as a school, or apprenticeship, to train primitive laborers to be independent farmers in the first generation of freedom. Generally, they were unable to take over so much responsibility even if they had the natural resources to do it. Landholders blamed the failure on inferiority of race, rather than on limitations in the institution of slavery. That the landowners wanted the freedmen to achieve this kind of success is at least doubtful, for they sought generally to reestablish and maintain their control over the freedmen by using them as laborers. They saw slavery in retrospect as an institution surrounded by a golden aura, a labor arrangement under which all went well and as they wanted it, not as a source contributing to the very difficulties of which they were making complaint.

When freedmen were employed as laborers on plantations, they received as compensation either wages or a share of the crop. Many variations of detail distinguished these contracts. During early years of reconstruction variations were so numerous that written references to practices were often ambiguous and vague.

Generally the labor contracts, whether for wages or shares, were made for the year, with a brief interim period from around Christmas into January for rehiring and for readjustment of employment. Accrued money wages were paid weekly or monthly, with usually a substantial holdback to assure completion of the year's work. If compensation was by a share of the crop, rations were advanced during the year; the final settlement was annual, when the crop was marketed.

Neither wages nor shares were entirely new arrangements to the planters of the South. Wages were the more common prior to emancipation, paid in the form of a rental to the owner for loan of the services of the slave. Sharecropping had been employed in tobacco growing, probably to a very limited extent.

Endless discussions of the merits and disadvantages of cash wages and of shares crowd the files of southern periodicals and the reports of observers during reconstruction. Both systems were employed all over the South, in proportions which varied from area to area, and from year to year. Each had its advocates.

In 1869 the Southern Cultivator published under the title, "The Labor Question," full discussions of the major systems for paying laborers, as reported by a committee to the Farmers' Club. Since these include most of the points raised in the other numerous commentaries which were appearing continually, copious excerpts of the committee reports are reproduced here.

There are but two practical forms of contract presented to our choice [said the committee]. The annual hiring for a share of the crop, and the annual hiring for stipulated wages. Day or job labor, while it may be employed as auxiliary or supplementary to one or the other of these, cannot be relied upon for the cultivation of our peculiar crops, and in the present condition of our laboring population.

Southern planters were strongly of the opinion that their situation was unique, and so they referred here to their "peculiar crops" just as they were in the habit of referring to the "peculiar race" which performed their field labor, and the "peculiar institution" of slavery which held them to their tasks.

The committee began its report with a list of the advantages of contracting with laborers for a share of the crop:

1st. It stimulates industry by giving the laborer an interest and pride in the crop. This advantage undoubtedly exists, but not to the extent which was at first anticipated. It has been found by experience, that only a comparatively small part of the laborers of the country are influenced by these stimulants, but with this small class they certainly have a positive existence.

2nd. It is regarded by the laborer as a higher form of contract, and is thereby more likely to secure labor especially in undesirable localities. It was this consideration more than any other, which at the outset led to the general adoption of the share contract. Then the colored laborer in the first flush of freedom--ignorant of the nature of his labor and of its dependence upon capital--seemed disposed to withdraw himself altogether from hire; while the farmer deluded by the high price of cotton, and accepting the theory that any labor was better than none at all, was prepared to make every concession. But time and experience has corrected these errors. The laborer has learned a better estimate of himself; while the farmer has been taught by sad experience that unless labor can be made efficient, it had better not be employed at all . . .

3rd. It gives the laborer a motive to protect the crop. This advantage will I think be generally recognized and needs scarcely to be commented upon.

4th. It does not subject the farmer to loss from a failure of or a decline in the value of his crop. This advantage has assumed I think an undue importance from the experience of last year. Such an extreme fluctuation in the value of our staple crop, is not likely to occur again. It was the result of ignorance, both on the part of the producer and of the consumer, of the probable crop under the new system of labor. This advantage will with more propriety, be recognized by those who are planting lands subject to overflow or when from other causes the crop is extremely uncertain.

Then the committee proceeded to list the disadvantages of the share system:

1st. The difficulty of discharging hands when they become inefficient or refractory. This practical evil has been felt by every farmer who has worked under the share contract, for though the contract may and generally has provided that the hand may be discharged, yet the practical difficulties attending it have been so great that the farmer has perhaps wisely submitted to almost any imposition, rather than attempt the doubtful expedient of a discharge with its attendant evils of a personal issue with the hand or an arraignment before a bureau, or a court where justice is generally administered solely in the interest of the laborer.

The evil is in fact, inherent in the system and must go far towards condemning it as a general form of contract.

2nd. The difficulty of carrying on general work of improvement on the farm. The tendency of the share system, has been to drift insensibly into the mere system of (single) cropping--that most pernicious of all systems under which the labor of a country has ever been employed--a system which leads to idleness on the part of the laborer for a large part of the year, to indolence and indifference on the part of the farm owner--to decay and ruin in the farm, and a certain decline in the productive resources of the country. These results are the more certain, just in proportion as the laboring population are indolent and thriftless. It was not originally intended that the share contract should be other than a contract for the year, simply substituting a portion of the crop in lieu of money wages, and unless it can be carried back and kept to this original idea, it will impoverish any farmer who attempts to work under it.

3rd. The annoyance and perplexity of harvesting and dividing the crop. The essence of the share system consists in dividing the hands into families or small bodies. Unless this is done, so far from stimulating industry, it discourages it. This involves the division of the farm often with loss and always with inconvenience. It requires the gin house to be sub-divided into small rooms, and leads to great loss of time in ginning and packing the crop.⁷⁶

The adoption of sharecropping was a factor in the changes in plantation lay-out that took place after emancipation. With separation of responsibility and compensation by families, the concentration of slave quarters close under the eye of the overseer began to give way to the now familiar dispersion of cabins. Robert Somers, the British traveller in the South during 1870-71, noticed this trend in location of cabins as slavery changed into sharecropping. The system of discipline and supervision was changing, and with it, as outward symbol, the housing arrangement. Somers wrote:

The negroes toiled in gangs or squads when slaves, and they toil necessarily, though under much less control of the planter, in the same form still. A strong family group, who can attach other labour, and bring odd hands to work at proper seasons, makes a choice, if not always attainable, nucleus of "a squad."⁷⁷

A correspondent of the Southern Cultivator from Mississippi told how, dissatisfied with wages, he turned to sharecropping and designed his labor housing accordingly. He said:

I have this year sold my team to the negroes--they to feed themselves, and I feed the team, and we share the crop in equal proportions. I built my houses 1/4 mile apart, fronting an 100 foot avenue, that runs centrally through my plantation. Each house stands about the middle of the 50 acre plot of land which is allotted to a squad. The plan so far seems successful--how it will be when the hot weather comes, I do not know . . .78

A variant of the sharecrop arrangement with each family was to make it with "squads of three or four men and their families." A Montgomery, Alabama, planter who described this plan in the Southern Cultivator in 1879 attributed his success with it to his close personal supervision, making it acceptable to the laborers by his demonstrated interest in its details, "by allowing each squad to retain its allotment of land from year to year--by discountenancing as firmly as possible, all disobedience of orders, or shirking of duty, and by demanding and enforcing a just division of the crops, both as to my own share and as to the subdivision of theirs among themselves."⁷⁹

Those planters who adopted the sharecrop system did so in part because of dissatisfaction over early experiments with wages. Early trial of shares turned others toward wages. But there were special reasons which turned more planters toward shares. In 1865 the Southern Cultivator carried a statement giving some of these. It said:

Now if faithful and honest laborers could be secured thereby, it would be better to agree to pay the hands a stipulated price per week--the contract to extend through the year--and at the end of each week to pay one-half the amount they had earned, and to reserve the balance until Christmas--to be forfeited meanwhile, in the case the hands failed to abide by their agreements. In case of adopting this mode of payment, it would be necessary also to adopt the rules observed in English and Northern factories. Day's work should consist of a certain specified number of hours of actual labor, not less than ten at any season . . .

The share system promised greater effectiveness in holding labor to its task to the end, and in preventing strikes.

It would be far better if full settlements could be made weekly, but in this case the negro could not be held to his contracts at all [continued the statement in the Southern Cultivator]. There are periods in the growth and maturing of the cotton crop in which a strike among the hands, or a lazy, inefficient manner of working, would be fatal to the planter's profits . . .80

The writer of the statement then set down three objections to the wages system which had special weight in the early years of reconstruction. First, he said,

The planter now knows not what kind of work he can secure, and if it is to be the sort of labor introduced the past season, he knows he can afford to offer very little. Most hands now observe no regular hours of work, and if they pretend to do so, they move so lazily that they do not earn their food; and he who hires them has no assurance that they will work any better another year, with all power of compulsion still withdrawn.

If the planter could not compel the performance of labor by the methods to which he had been accustomed, at least by paying shares of the crop he might avoid paying laborers for work they did not do.

In setting down his second special reason, the writer in the Southern Cultivator had an eye to a means for escaping the critical judgments of those Northerners who were interfering with planter and laborer relations in the interest of the freedman. "Since, from the above reasons [i.e. the freedmen's inefficiency and undependability] but moderate wages can be offered, the Northern radicals will immediately raise a hue and cry that the planters are oppressing and defrauding the negro, and bring up the rates of wages as proof." In other words, annual settlement of crop shares concealed low earnings of freedmen more effectively than the more conspicuous wage rates.

The third special reason lay in the necessities of war-damaged planters. The writer concluded:

But if these objections could be got over, there remains this insuperable one, that in most cases, our people are so impoverished that they cannot command the means to make these weekly payments. They are fortunate if they can furnish teams, implements, and food. ⁸¹

There remained the method of paying a share of the crop which the writer recommended as "at present to be the best for all parties . . ."

Planters were far from unanimous in preference for sharecropping, but they did adopt it widely during the early years of reconstruction. The Mississippi correspondent of the Southern Cultivator whose choice of shares was quoted earlier tried without satisfaction to pay first-class hands:

. . . fifteen dollars per month--they finding themselves. I allowed no trading with them, but paid them two-thirds of their wages at the end of each month, reserving one-third as a forfeit [he said]. I made it a point to settle with punctuality at the end of the month. Notwithstanding this, most of them left before the crop was laid by, leaving the forfeit in my hands.⁸²

The observations of Robert Somers confirmed that this confidence of planters in the power of shares to retain their laborers was a widespread, if not altogether well-founded consideration at a time when emancipation had just opened the door to new labor mobility on the laborer's initiative. He noted:

The rapid and regular picking of the cotton crop, which is the greatest difficulty of the planter, has kept the share system more in countenance than anything else, but in practical experience it seems to fail at this point as at others. The share system implies rations to the negro from the beginning of the year to the end, and if the rations for a week are consumed in half that time, an additional supply must be given, which places the negro so heavily in debt to his employer by the time the picking season has come, that he is apt, more especially under declining prices as this year, to be regardless of the financial results of the partnership with his employer into which he entered in January.⁸³

Sharecropping received its measure of criticism. In North Carolina in 1867 it was attacked as "ruinous to planter and laborer alike." In the columns of the Southern Cultivator of 1878 it was said that "no man should have a partner who is not his equal socially. This objection, we opine, is hard to get over."⁸⁴ Another writer in the same year said emphatically:

I contend that the laborers should be employed for money wages, and never for a portion of the crop . . .

Negroes left to their own judgment, and their own volition must fail, for with a very few exceptions they have neither; and where you work "on shares," they are beyond cavil co-partners, and they have a right, and in the fullness of their conceit, exercise that right, to have a say so in everything. [That is, the landowner would not have complete control of agricultural operations.] Besides [continued the writer], upon the co-partnership principle, your plantation will run down and be turned out of doors in three years--to say nothing of the annoyance of having no one to cut and haul your family fuel, or go on errands, or haul anything for your family, or repair a gate, or hang a fallen door, or put up a fence

blown down that does not enclose their crop, or do anything, except to cultivate the crop.⁸⁵

These are examples of what was said in the South repeatedly against paying laborers with a share of the crop. But neither the persistent criticism of agricultural advisers, nor the opposition of freedmen, where it appeared, were sufficient to prevent the wide spread of the practice.

Robert Somers was astonished at the prevalence of sharecropping, which he found "so stoutly defended by many persons of practical experience that it requires some hardihood of conviction to avow an opposite opinion . . ."⁸⁶ Nevertheless, he expected it to pass away as not "consistent either with the well-being of the negroes or with the agricultural development of the South."⁸⁷ His characterizations of sharecropping were not entirely consistent, but of their hostility there was no doubt. At one point he described it as "the existing pact of capital and labor" which "partakes of the largest communism probably ever attempted in any part of the civilized world," because the laborer by an "excess of privilege" has assured subsistence, at the planter's expense. In another description he called sharecropping "a half-way slavery."⁸⁸

The preference of the Negro laborer as between sharecropping and wages was not entirely clear nor unmixed. In 1867, for example, an item reprinted from the Macon, Georgia, Journal and Messenger said that "Few or none of the negroes will accept a share in the prospective crop as compensation."⁸⁹ In 1871 the letter of a correspondent of the Southern Cultivator from Mississippi was equally emphatic that the Negroes of his vicinity were of the opposite opinion: "Negroes will only work cotton and corn," he complained of this obstacle to crop diversification, "and that on shares and no other way."⁹⁰

To a journal published mainly for planters, such as the Southern Cultivator, the preference of the freedmen was neither a primary consideration, nor noted with frequency. The freedmen had few occasions, or easy means to make written record of their own preference of what type of contract should exist between themselves and their employers. Neither did they decide what contract would be offered them.

In the opinion of General Schurz and of officials of the Freedmen's Bureau, the preference of the freedmen was against sharecropping, and in favor of wages. The clearer it became that sharecropping would not relieve the cropper of control by the planter, in all probability the less likely was the freedman to prefer it. General Schurz reported of the sharecropping prevalent in 1866:

In many instances the shares are allotted between employers and laborers with great fairness; but in others the share promised to the laborers is so small as to leave them in the end very little or nothing. Moreover, the crops in the south looked generally very unpromising from the beginning, which naturally reduced the value falling to the lot of the laborer. I have heard a good many freedmen complain that, taking all things into consideration, they really did not know what they were working for except food, which in many instances was bad and scanty; and such complaints were frequently well founded. In a large number of cases the planters were not to blame for this; they had no available pecuniary means, and in many localities found it difficult to procure provisions. . . . I have heard it said that money is no inducement which will make a negro work. It is certain that many of them, immediately after emancipation, had but a crude conception of the value of money and the uses it can be put to. It may, however, be stated as the general rule, that whenever they are at liberty to choose between wages in money and a share in the crop, they will choose the former and work better.⁹¹

Two years later the agent of the Freedmen's Bureau at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, reported similarly that the freedmen preferred wages. "Quite a number of freedmen who have been cropping for the past two years now prefer to work for wages," he said, "as they can understand this mode better, and it does not give the employer the same opportunity to take advantage, as in the more complicated crop system."⁹²

The committee of the Farmers' Club which in 1869 reported the pros and cons of sharecropping in such detail did the same for the practice of paying wages in cash. Its report began with the advantages:

1st. It gives the farmer control over his labor, by enabling him to discharge his hands when they become inefficient. Control over labor is essential to success in any pursuit, and with free labor the only control which the employer can have grows out of the right to discharge.

2nd. It stimulates industry and enterprise on the part of the farmer. While the share system has undoubtedly the effect of detracting from the farmer an interest in the crop, and deterring from improvement; the wages system has naturally the opposite effect. Under it every improvement and increase of the crop inures entirely and directly to the employer; while a failure is his loss only. These considerations lead naturally to a liberal system of manuring, the full application of animal power, and the use of improved agricultural implements--the three leading conditions of success.

3d. It leads to economy in labor. When the farmer pays a specific money equivalent for labor, he naturally seeks to reduce the amount employed. This leads him to endeavor to accomplish certain results by an improved condition of his soil, and by the substitution of animal for human labor--far cheaper and more docile. While individual interests would be promoted by this policy; its benefit to the country would be incalculable. It would result at once in making labor so abundant as to give capital a reasonable and natural control.

The leading cause of the scarcity of labor in many sections is, I believe, owing to the share system, under which a large number of hands are often crowded upon farms where their labor is absolutely thrown away for want of proper supervision, improved agricultural tools, and a reasonable supply of animal power.

When we remember that the labor of one man with a horse is equal to that of five men, we can estimate the immense loss from this cause. How poor a chance is there for general prosperity where there is so reckless a prodigality of human labor?

4th. It enables the farmer to carry on a general system of improvement. This has been found almost impossible under the share system. Even where the hand recognizes his obligation, he is generally so reluctant a laborer as to be scarcely worth looking after.⁹³

The committee then proceeded at once to a listing of the disadvantages--which it said "are not numerous"--of payment in cash wages:

It may lead:

1st. To a competition for labor which may carry wages so high as to be ruinous to the farmer.

2nd. It involves far greater labor in supervising and protecting the crop. This is a serious consideration where the land owner, I will not say farmer, has neither time or inclination to supervise closely, his interests, but ordinarily this advantage is more apparent than real. Indeed if it have the effect of compelling closer attention on the part of the proprietor, it will prove of the highest advantage. Close personal attention, is the great want, and if the wages system shall extort this from the indolent and reluctant farmer it will bring to him the highest boon. The farm will then become, not only a source of income, but a source of happiness, affording him useful and agreeable occupation.⁹⁴

In columns of the Southern Cultivator, carrying comparisons between payment in shares and payment in cash wages, the weight was on the side of wages over shares. For example, the success of a South Carolina rice planter with 175 laborers, who operated on a wage basis with weekly settlements and supplies available at the plantation store, was described in 1869. It was pointed out:

The weekly settlement clears all accounts between the planter and the laborer. . . . At the end of the year, when the temptations to change are the strongest, there are no accounts to adjust or explain. They are themselves able to count up and ascertain how much they hold in due bills, and to determine consequently how much is to be paid them in currency. There are no books, no calculations, no deductions to be made or balances struck. All who at Christmas have had to deal with disappointed laborers, relying upon these appliances to enlighten their minds, and exorcise the evil spirit of discontent that possesses them, will realize the comfort of this immunity.⁹⁵

For a number of years after emancipation the debate over the relative merits of shares and of cash wages was carried on mainly in terms of which system afforded the planter the superior control over his laborers in order to assure a good crop. The Farmers' Club was aware that fluctuations in the price of cotton, if great enough, could be an important factor in deciding the planter's preference between the two systems, but the recurrence of an "extreme fluctuation" in price of cotton was thought "not likely to occur again." Considerations of labor management, therefore, were paramount with the planters.

Robert Somers, the outside observer, was more deeply concerned than the planters over the possible effects of future price fluctuation. He opposed sharecropping generally on the ground that it furnished incentive to specialization in cotton, and retarded agricultural improvement by crop diversification. His specific concern over price fluctuation was what its effects could be on freedmen whose compensation was in shares. He doubted that the freedman would either understand or be content with the effect of market fluctuations upon the value of his share of the crop. This "uncertainty and inequality of the return for labour" he wrote, was the "disadvantage" of this mode of payment.

In view of the wholehearted embrace of sharecropping by planters later, when severe fluctuations did occur, it is interesting that Somers in 1870-71 spoke of this as an "acknowledged" disadvantage. He said:

The negroes on the share system, for example, had a larger remuneration last year, when the price of cotton was high, than they will have this year, when it has suffered a heavy decline. Can the negro be expected to understand or be satisfied with the fluctuating scale of remuneration for his toil? Is it desirable that he should be dragged, at his present stage of progress, into all the ups and downs of cotton speculation? Is he likely to comprehend that, while doing his best probably in both years, he should have less this year than last, because France and Prussia have gone to war? And if he cannot comprehend this, is there not a danger that he may be discontented, and think himself the victim of some fraud or injustice nearer home?⁹⁶

Whether or not the effects of severe price fluctuation on the division of the product between planter and sharecropper were an "acknowledged disadvantage" or not depended a good deal on what was uppermost in the mind of the person at the time he made acknowledgment. When severe downward fluctuations recurred, a good many planters saw fit to alter their point of view, and practice, in favor of paying labor in shares rather than in cash. The editor of the Southern Cultivator arrived at his new position by visible stages.

During the latter half of the seventies, successive years of low cotton prices influenced planters to cast about for means of reducing the cost of labor. Several ways of doing this occurred to them, and to those like the editor of the Southern Cultivator who thought for them. One remedy appeared to be to raise more provisions on the plantation, to spare laborers the outlay of cash to purchase them. In his column on "Thoughts for the Month" for October 1876, the editor of the Cultivator wrote:

Many persons imagine that it makes no difference what the negro has to pay for his food and clothing. That is a great mistake--the cost of living inevitably regulates the price of labor. It takes time to make the adjustment. Reduction of wages is always resisted at first, but it must follow reduction in the cost of living.⁹⁷

The following January the editor explored further his theme that wages somehow must be reduced, and pointed out the opportunity to avoid the

high costs of merchants' credit. He still thought that to raise food on the plantation was the best way to accomplish the same result, i.e. to make it possible for the wages received to purchase more food. He wrote:

The present, . . . whilst there is a general shrinking and readjusting of values, is a fitting time to readjust also the relations of labor and capital. We are thoroughly convinced that a laborer can live as well, if not better than he has for the last ten years, upon decidedly smaller wages, provided the farmer will take charge of the matter by raising enough provisions at home. It cannot be done, if the negro is left to the mercy of the merchants' extravagant time prices for corn and bacon. . . . The reduction in cost of food and clothing on the one hand, and the reduced prices of farm products on the other, furnish the elements of the calculation [he continued]. The price for labor, which has prevailed until quite recently, was established immediately after the war, when everything was inflated, when cotton, our leading staple, commanded from two to three times its present price; and it is not fair that all the loss from shrinkage should fall on the landholder--let the laborer bear his share also.⁹⁸

Clearly, the editor was groping for ways to facilitate transferring a share of the burden.

In February 1877 an article carried in the Southern Cultivator proposed reducing the sharecropper's customary share as a step toward cutting labor cost. Its author was of the opinion that "the part of the crop given the laborer has been entirely too large." In support he cited "the Commissioner of Agriculture of Georgia, [who] reports that over one-half of the farmers of Georgia, who adopt this mode of hiring, give one-half the crop to the laborer--whereas, one-third is about the proper average amount."⁹⁹

The editor of the Southern Cultivator himself clung for a time to wages as generally the better mode of employing labor. This belief, however, was soon to go down under the pressure to lower labor costs exerted by reduced cotton prices. "The money wages system has worked best, because it is free from complications such as we have been considering--," said the editor in February 1877, "the landlord by common consent controls the negro's whole time--withholding half the wages till the end of the year, enforces good behavior, whilst monthly payments of

a part please and gratify--the only drawback as compared with the share crop system being the lack of interest in the proceeds of the labor."¹⁰⁰

Two years later, in his "Thoughts for the Month" for January 1879, the editor abandoned his traditional advice to pay wages and came out for a sharecrop system paying one-third to the laborer as the step necessary to enable the planter to reduce labor costs. First he traced the "general shrinkage in values" since the panic of 1873, and indicated his belief that the high price of labor was the crucial problem. He wrote:

But the price of labor--that which the farmer uses most of all to make cotton--what about that? Ah, there is the rub! Labor has not declined in value proportionately to that which labor produces--nor to those things which the labor must buy, to-wit: clothing and food. And this, it seems to us, is the great underlying universal cause of business stagnation everywhere. The merchant lacks confidence in the farmer, because he sees he has little or no money left after paying the expenses of making the crop. The capitalist hesitates to invest in industrial enterprises, because he sees that expenses eat up all the profits and a portion of the capital invested.

Next the editor drew a moral for planters from the difficulties encountered by industrial employers when they tried to reduce wages against organized labor resistance. He continued:

Those who have already invested, as manufacturers, railroad managers, miners, etc., have attempted to relieve themselves by reducing wages, but success has been very partial. Laborers have resisted it, "strikes" have followed, and a general unsettling of business ensued. Now the farmer can attempt reduction of wages only through the contracts he makes at the beginning of the year--his crops once planted, he is at the mercy of the laborer. It then becomes a question of losing the whole, or paying one-half or three-fourths of its value, to secure the remainder. The labor arrangement for the year then, is the paramount question of the day.

The editor then proposed his solution for the depressed price of cotton: to divide the burden with the laborer by paying him in shares.

Heretofore we have advised hiring for money or standing wages--and still think this the best arrangement when labor can be hired at reasonable rates. But under existing circumstances, when labor is

high compared with the products of labor, it is better to pay in part of the crop, and thus compel the laborer to share with the landlord the loss from low prices, bad seasons, etc.¹⁰¹

The same issue of the Southern Cultivator carried an article over the name of one called "The Great Farmer," which gave complete support to the editor's newly found preference for sharecropping. "It is out of the question for a farmer to make money now on hired labor . . ." wrote "The Great Farmer"; "pay the laborer, if he hires for wages, in the products of the land; then he shares with you the loss occasioned by low prices."¹⁰²

The major decision between sharecropping and wages had turned ultimately, not on the relative merits of the two systems as methods of management or of remuneration of the laborer, but on the fact that sharecropping lent itself more readily to a cutting of wages and labor costs, one which laborers were less likely to resist with success.

It was a full decade, apparently, before the Southern Cultivator again published, this time in form of an address by the editor of the Progressive Farmer of North Carolina, a denunciation of the sharecrop system and an unqualified approval of wages. The talk now was not of depressed cotton prices, but of bad management. In an address delivered before the Farmers' Inter-State Convention at Atlanta in 1887, Col. L. L. Polk declared:

The next defect . . . is our "tenant" system, by which I mean that practice among the farmers in the South of renting or leasing lands to tenants to be managed and cultivated according to their own methods. . . . For if there be any one phase of the labor system of the South which is settled beyond all question among the intelligent Southern farmers, it is that we may hope for no improvement of lands or crops or methods if left to the control of free-negro tenants. The wage-labor system, established on the equitable principle of giving a just price for labor, and demanding in return a just equivalent from labor, would give to the employees and those dependent on him the full benefit of a fair value for his labor and would keep the care and cultivation of the lands where it should always be, under the direct control and supervision of the owner.¹⁰³

The planters' preferences for one or another manner of arranging their labor relations were neither unanimous nor unchanging. In 1868,

for example, the editor of DeBow's Review opposed in detail the practice of making contracts with wage laborers by the year. In 1884 a writer in Southern Cultivator favored the same practice, giving reasons in equal detail. The editor's 1868 attack upon yearly wage contracts follows:

Our contributor attributes the exactions of the laborers, to a want of combination, or rather of co-operation on the part of the planters. It would be difficult and discouraging to form combinations to control wages. The laborer is entitled to a just compensation, and will indeed, in the end, always obtain a fair share of what his labor sells for in the perfected product. We have heretofore expressed, and now repeat our opinion of what the planter should do to protect himself from the fluctuations in the rate of wages. Our planters cannot forget the old system. They will employ free labor by the year. They will bind themselves to feed and find for the year. They thus become insurers of the weight and price of the crop. The wages for the year are fixed at the January prices, they are paid at the December prices. Now as the tending of cotton has been to a lower rate, it has followed in some years since the war that the prices of the crop do not justify the rate of wages contracted before it was planted. Besides, what with worms, drought, overflow, and other accidents, it sometimes happens that before the crop is half grown, it is evidently inadequate to pay the laborers. The planter then pays board and wages during the balance of the season. The remedy of all this is to make short time contracts, as is done with free farm labor every where else. If the price or prospect of prices continues unchanged --if the planters hopes and the freedmans conduct justifies a continuance of the rates, they can be continued; if not, it will be in the power of the planter to save himself from large loss, by reducing or closing his labor contract. It may be said that this would place it in the power of the laborer to strike at critical periods. This is not the case elsewhere. An Illinois farmer will sow a crop of wheat with the confidence that he can command the labor to harvest it. In the South the laborer is more dependent on the land owner, than the land owner on the laborer. Such a modification of the labor contract is the only suggestion we have to make on the means of rendering the culture of cotton safer for the planter, without being less just to the laborer.¹⁰⁴

The 1884 defense of daily labor contracts is particularly interesting because it was at such pains to report the skepticism of freedmen after experience with year-round contracts:

There is another class of laborers against which I think it would be well for us to use our influence, and that is day laborers; because they demoralize the balance of the hands who are hired by the year. They tell them that their employers are swindling them,

and that they can make just as much clear money and not work half the time. It gets them in the habit of loafing; and not being able to get employment all the time, hence they take to pilfering. And indeed there is nothing reliable about them any way. No man can depend on them to cultivate his crops, unless he lives right in the edge of a town. And if he can get them whenever he wants them, he has to stay right in the field with them all the time; because if he does not they will slight his work and ruin his crop. They don't care how much they injure you; all they are after is pay for that day's work. And then it brings about another trouble. It is getting so a great many men are dependent on this day labor for most of their farm work. Consequently if they get in the grass, or if their crop needs gathering, they are compelled to hire these hands at any price, or lose all. The man who offers the most gets them first. And then, you see, it takes cash money all during the year to employ this class of labor. They have the farmer at their mercy. And this day labor increases every year. Gentlemen, we ought to have some system and combined effort against such things. Let us see what has caused so much of this day labor. Of course, there always will be some, under any circumstances; but when there is so much of it there is some special reason. I have asked numbers of them why they preferred to run about by the day, when they could get plenty of regular work to do by the year. And they all tell me that it is because men will not pay them at the end of the year. They say it doesn't matter how economical they live during the year, that it is impossible for them to clear anything; and when they work by the day they are sure of their money. And, gentlemen, I think they are about half right. Of course a great many of them take it up during the year and think they are swindled, when really they are not; but I honestly believe many of them are cheated out of it. When a negro questions his account the majority of white men are too easy to get insulted, and knock him down or curse him out. You know most of the negroes are not quick of perception and ready of understanding; and when these doubts arise in their minds we ought to take time and explain them away and be kind to them. I know men who are never troubled about getting hands by the year, or any other way, and they work them harder than anybody. And why? The negro tells the whole secret. He says: "Dat man will work you like the devil, but he give you a good house to live in; he give you plenty to eat, and pay you all dat's comin' to you." That is argument enough. A man will never lack for labor who does that. But you can't always be able to do that, unless you get the work out of them. Yes, gentlemen, if we would have good labor we must give it a just compensation, and give it freely, when the work is done.¹⁰⁵

The manifestations of the planters' insistence upon reestablishing a strong control of labor, it is clear, lie not only in the Black

Codes cited earlier. They permeate discussion after discussion of the proper manner for handling plantation laborers, for interpreting share controls, or for creating a labor market with enough surplus laborers in it, bidding against each other, to be favorable to the planters.

First are the simple and mild repetitions in the Southern Cultivator of the advice to supervise closely and in person:

1867: Let us bear in mind that there is no profit in the labor of freedmen, unless working directly under a white man's supervision, and no supervision is half so valuable as that of the planter himself . . . without close supervision, and in most cases, without an energetic white man working with the plantation hands, no profit can be made on their labor.¹⁰⁶

1868: This year, our first at farming, has thoroughly convinced us that part of the crop is not sufficient to insure faithful service. Nothing short of the continual presence of the owner or manager will do this.¹⁰⁷

1889: Now-a-days one hears much complaint of the labor, and while it is really unreliable, whose fault is it? That lazy lack of order and system prevails--simply, the manager's, for as he or she does, acts and leads, they, the laborers, are forced to follow. Negroes, as a class, are shiftless and unreliable, but my personal experience, and observation is this, that under the watchful eye of "de cap'in," as they style their overseers, the majority of their labor can be made profitable, but when we neglect our own work and duty, how can we expect or require a negro to be more careful of it and no one can expect to make money at planting or any other business unless they look after it closely, and give their every moment to its interest and promotion. With the careless, indifferent handling of labor that universally prevails, a large crop costs all it is worth to make it, and a small one leaves the planter in debt . . .¹⁰⁸

Counsel in the art of controlling labor, advice on how to assure that laborers complete their contracts, and appeals to employers to act in concert appeared frequently in the columns of the Southern Cultivator. For example:

1865: The great problem is not so much one of quantity as of quality of labor. There is an abundance of the bone, thews, and sinews of the man, and there is a sufficiency of intelligence to direct and guide it to a profitable end; but the practical difficulty which interests and concerns every one in all the affairs of life, is the uncertainty and instability of the labor after it is engaged . . . this must be remedied . . .

I think the answer is after this wise: The negro is a freeman, perfectly and legally competent to make contracts. Let the contracting parties remember this. Let the employer draw up in writing, in a few simple terms, all the conditions of the contract. Let this be attested by competent witnesses. Let certain penalties attach to the party violating this contract; and, above all, let the terms of payment be only and always after the fulfillment of the contract. If the negro make an engagement to continue one or twelve months, retain always at least a very large proportion of the wages in the hands of the employer--at least as large a portion as will make it to the interest of the negro to complete the engagement. This is not hard nor harsh to the laborer--it is equitable and just. White people are constantly making such contracts. There is a very spurious sickly sentimentality about the negro, which we must get rid of and that speedily, both for our own sakes and his, the negro has obligations as well as the white man, and must be as sternly bound by the terms of contract as the white man, and must be taught that he cannot violate a contract without penalty. He is competent to make a bargain; he must stand to it.

But I am met by the reply, the negro will not consent to such terms and conditions of contract. I answer, if all employers will settle and agree upon some plan, and in good faith carry them out, he must consent or starve. Let no one employ him without such contract, and he must go unemployed. There is no alternative but starvation. If farmers and others should agree upon some such plan, and pledge themselves one to another that they would not employ any man who could not bring clean papers from his last employer . . . 109

1867: I have acted in a subordinate position myself, under the authority of military superiors. I then found what it was to be a slave, or a hired laborer, or a freedman, as we now have them to control. Speak to them mildly and respectfully--bearing in mind how you would like to be treated, were you in their stead; but at the same time, suffer no impudence, in language or deed, and give them to understand that they shall not give it in no possible manner, and fight before you suffer it, and you won't have but one trial. 110

1867: The Crops of the South of 1866 A Failure--Why! . . . The relation of master and servant having been changed by the war, and both parties being badly demoralized, we felt our authority over them had vanished with emancipation, and that they could not be efficient laborers. It was difficult for us to command and order them with authority, to go and do a thing, and feel assured it would be done, and force obedience if it was not done. We thought we had to adopt the advisory plan, and ask them if they can't do so and so. And so it was, in many instances, the authority

to order them, and force obedience, had been removed from us. To work from choice, from the mere love of work, for part of the crop, or for wages, was a new thing to them, and they scarcely realized and understood it. It was contrary to old customs, and their notions of things. Freedom was inconsistent and contrary to the nature of most negroes. They did not understand how they could be free, and be compelled to work at the same time for support. Hence, many of them deny that they are free, but contend they are greater slaves than ever, and do not thank the government for their freedom, and despise the Yankee from the bottom of their hearts.¹¹¹

1868: . . . whatever system we adopt let us be firm and decided. Don't promise and never pay. Give what is right and don't deceive the negro. Don't go out to look up hands, by any means. Let them hunt homes and they will not be so arrogant and self inflated. Dictate your own terms to them and they will not be so apt to waver and doubt--thinking they might have done better. Let a certain price rule the land throughout, and they will not be telling of what one and another has offered. Let those who are not known bring written recommendations from former employers.

This I advise for the good of both white and black. Then we could soon have a system of labor superior to the old one of slavery. Will we have this regularity in the price of wages? We can have it. Will we have it? Let all do their duty.¹¹²

1868: The three great essentials are . . . second, the art of controlling labor . . . I will say, to succeed you not only must be superior to your laborers, but you must be so far ahead of them, that they shall know that your plans are wise, easy to put in practice, and certain of success.--Then they will follow you in a charge, as good soldiers will the best of generals.¹¹³

1868: Let us come to practical things. We have the laborer in our midst--the best on earth, the negro--and if he is not profitable, the fault is with the whites.

1870: "A worker" asks for a plan to get work out of freedmen. There is one said to work well in some portions of this State. It is this: "A freedman cannot obtain employment unless he brings with him a regular discharge, accompanied with a certificate of good character from his last employer." If this were adopted as a rule throughout the South, we would hear no complaint of the negro's laziness; but, alas! for human nature, each one is so afraid his neighbor will make more cotton than himself, he hires every worthless negro that is out of employment that he can, and in some instances endeavors to hire those already under contract. The Southern planters are responsible, to a great extent, for the freedman's worthlessness. They have had from the beginning, all the lands, etc., in their possession, and if they had never run after the negroes, but turned them loose at the close of the year,

tant to increase his own employment, and to diminish his dependence upon the labor of others. Diversification contributed to these objectives. Planters' reasons for diversification were different. Reducing total labor demand by partial substitution of grain for cotton could create a relatively larger and more tractable supply of laborers competing for the reduced employment in cotton. Thus a Georgian's advice, carried by the Southern Cultivator, was:

Instead of cotton fields, and patches of grain, let us have fields of grain, and patches of cotton . . . I have not space to discuss the merits of this change, only its effect on labor, the question under consideration. It requires as much again labor to cultivate a cotton crop, as a grain crop. With only one third in cotton, every farmer could dismiss at least one third of his labor. This would produce a large surplus of labor, which would reduce its value, and make it more effective. . . .--As it is, with nearly all the land in cotton, there is an increasing demand for labor, and Cuffee can act as he pleases without fear of being dismissed. He knows well enough if he is turned off, there is no one to fill his place. He has no fears on this point, let him act as he may he can retain his situation, or secure another at pleasure. But give us a large amount of surplus labor, and the thing will be reversed. Instead of the place seeking the negro, the negro would seek the place; and having obtained it, he would work better, and do better in every respect to retain it. We then too could hire him for standing wages, and abandon to a great extent, this miserable co-partnership business with the african.¹¹⁸

In the second half of the seventies, a campaign by the editor of the Southern Cultivator to meet fallen prices by planting less exclusively to cotton was taking some effect. Noting this successful move in the direction of diversification the editor was pleased particularly to observe its tendency to flood the labor market to the advantage of planters. He wrote:

At the beginning of the year, a number of things press themselves upon the attention of the farmer. Of these, during the last ten years, securing needed labor has taken precedence of all others. Every one seemed to fear that everybody else would get ahead of him and that he would have no labor at all. Hence a universal rush at the negro--each out-bidding the other, the negro in the meantime feeling like a maiden with a dozen suitors at her feet--entire master of the situation. For the last year or two a change for the better has taken place in this respect, and the negro is

not courted now as much as he formerly was. Big cotton (exclusive) plantations, run wholly on credit, are not as numerous as they were, and with their disappearance the demand for labor has decreased, and, at present, capital and labor are beginning to meet on the same platform.¹¹⁹

This success, from the editor's viewpoint, seemed to augur further measures with the same effect, and the close of the era of federal reconstruction in the South made him optimistic. He wrote:

The proper place for the negro in every point of view--political, social and industrial, is one of friendly subordination to the whites,--insuring on the one side kindness, care, protection and means of support, and on the other, cheerful, steady, and reliable labor. The time has come, we think, when in most of the Southern States such relation between the races can be readily established.¹²⁰

Under these conditions of fallen cotton prices and withdrawal of federal control, it seemed desirable also to tighten up the work requirements under the crop-sharing system. Sharecropping, said an article in February 1877, on "Labor--Best Course for Farmers":

. . . might be arranged, if concert of action could be secured, to work very well. The first point to be changed is, the prevailing opinion, on the part of the negro, that a contract of this kind requires of him to work and harvest the crop only and nothing more. Instead of this, the truth is, that a "part of the crop" is the equivalent of a hire's hire for wages and entitles the landlord to the labor of the hireling for the whole year, and contracts should be drawn up accordingly. Another prevalent idea should be expunged from this form of contract, to wit, that the laborer and landlord thereby become partners, giving the laborer a right of direction in the management of the crop. The farmer should never yield his control of everything on the farm to ignorant laborers. . . . It would be proper, before the contract is made, for landlord and laborer to agree as to what crops are to be planted, but that done, the former should retain exclusive control of everything. To enforce the faithful performance of the contract by the laborer, it should be stipulated that a portion of the crop, coming to him --say one-half--should not be delivered to him till Christmas--with the right of withholding a part altogether if he fails to work a portion of the year. Under such regulations we see no objection to the second mode of hiring labor. As practiced heretofore, it has been a very one-sided affair, greatly to the advantage of the negro--relieving him from work at least two months of the year.¹²¹

Thus the planters' advantage of position was pressed. Together with a proposal made at the same time to cut the share of the laborer

from one-half to one-third of the crop, it represented a determined effort to secure more work for less money, and thus to cut labor costs.

The question whether or not to go in heavily for use of farm machinery was looked at by planters in much the same way as they looked at proposals to diversify crops: other considerations might be important, but the effect on labor costs was primary. From this point of view, increased use of machinery offered a chance to substitute laborers engaged for only a season in a flooded labor market, in the place of laborers employed the year around. Advising his readers "How to cultivate large farms with few laborers," the editor of the Southern Cultivator wrote in 1868:

From every side we hear of contraction in farming operations for the current year. This will throw many negroes out of regular employment and farmers will hereafter find less difficulty in procuring extra labor at harvesting and at other times of pressing work. Under the old system the operations of the farm were mainly regulated by the number of hands necessary to keep down grass during the months of May and June. A farmer with ten slaves could cultivate from 150 to 200 acres of land.--These hands having to be fed all the year, he did not feel sensibly any loss from having them employed all the winter in the plowing and preparation of his fields for the ensuing crop. Now, suppose, by improved machinery, by using large plows, &c., &c., he could make two hands do the winter work and employ the additional eight hands only three or four months in the year, how great the saving would be.¹²²

Taking a cue from northern farmers, an Arkansas correspondent wrote similarly in 1868 of the advantages of machinery and seasonal labor, but in language more applicable to farms than to plantations.

The owner of the farm, requiring the least amount of labor, can, of course, afford the highest rate of wages for what is required, and especially as his hands, in operating labor-saving implements, can earn much more than they otherwise could--while, being few in number, and employed but for a short time, they consume little; hence, his surplus, at the end of the year, will be vastly more than his, who has had a large number of hands eating up his substance throughout the entire year.¹²³

Some correspondents of the Southern Cultivator saw as the way out of the post-emancipation labor problem, operation of farms, each by a family with its own labor. Occasional items in that tenor found their

way into the columns of the periodical, but they served mainly by contrast to heighten the tone of the Southern Cultivator as a journal devoted to the interests of the planters.

The planter's interest as employer and landowner was in the forefront of an 1869 item in DeBow's Review. The alternatives of renting lands to Negroes and of selling lands to white migrants to the South were weighed against each other:

With the year 1868, was commenced a system of labor which cannot fail in the end, to utterly abolish the system so long adhered to in the South. Many men, owning large tracts of poor land, found it impossible to procure labor at any price, by which a margin was left for profit. In this strait, the idea suggested itself of cutting the plantation up into numerous small farms, or rather patches, and of renting these to negroes. To one acquainted with the characteristics of the race, it is no matter of surprise that this temptation proved irresistible. Every negro who procured one of these patches, saw himself at once in the light of an independent planter, placed upon an equal footing with his former master, and, looking into the future, beheld in himself a landed proprietor, "having others under him in authority."

The majority of the planters have, thus far, resolutely opposed this movement. Were the negroes like any other race of beings, yet created, this system might be made to work, but with them, it will not. The reason is simply this: The negro, left to himself, will barely do enough work to support existence. Without a single thought for to-morrow, beyond that of patiently believing that he will one day be made rich; he lives entirely for the present, caring not to lay by the wherewith by which the weather may be defied at some future rainy day. It is evident, that until some competition is produced by the importation of labor, the negro element will have the question of wages pretty much in their own hands. Their demands are already so exorbitant, that cotton raising has nearly ceased to be a money making business. As the price of labor goes up, the price of land declines. Cotton lands that were formerly estimated at \$30, can now be bought for \$10. Rents have fallen proportionately.¹²⁴

An obvious way to depress the bargaining power of laborers was to flood the market with immigrants. Planters gave this much consideration; if actual results were not extensive, it was not for lack of thinking about it. And the thoughts which the planters recorded are interesting now--for the planters' manner of thinking about their labor (and political) problem quite as much as for the details of their plan.

After emancipation the South talked much of inviting immigrants from Europe. Planters were eager for any alternative which would free them from having to deal with their traditional laborers with whom they could no longer deal in the traditional ways. The heavy preponderance of Negro population in Mississippi brought political reasons for encouraging white immigration to the fore. In 1867 DeBow's Review republished articles on immigration from Columbus, Mississippi, newspapers. One of these said:

The fact stares us in the face that one-third of the rich lands of Lowndes county must lie idle next year, unless some steps are taken to secure an additional amount of labor--that under the present system, the remaining two-thirds must be poorly cultivated. We have seen our effective planting force decrease since the surrender at the rate of twenty per cent. per annum, and we know enough of the disposition of the freedmen to feel that this must continue. . . . The men of families are looking out for land to buy--the women are quitting the fields, the children flock to the neighboring schools as naturally as "chickens come home to roost." . . . We have the finest lands in the world, yet gentlemen planters, what are those lands worth? from twenty-five cents to twenty-five dollars. What would they be worth if every fifteen acres of tillable land had an industrious laborer on it? One hundred dollars! Cultivate our plantations as we should--open all the lands that we can--raise cotton and corn in the prairies--cultivate fruit, grapes and vegetables upon the poor hills--make everything available and Lowndes County will become a second Bourbon or Murray. Money can be had at six per cent per annum, the necessaries and comforts of life will go for a song, and the Eastern and Southern cities will be tributaries of our commerce. The German, by his energy, frugality, and wonderful industry has built up the great North-west and infused vitality into the Northern character. Had it not been for Slavery, Mississippi would have been the Ohio of the South, and the late struggle for independence a glorious success. . . . If a change for good is effected, it can only be by the importation of white men, to stand shoulder to shoulder with white men in perpetuating a white man's government, and checkmating Yankee ingenuity to drive the Southron [sic] from his home, and inviting negro rule, and with it ruin, and giving them an excuse to people it with the minions of their power. We are outnumbered in Mississippi by the negroes; they are gentle, docile and obedient, as a class, at present. Yet Kelly, Sumner and others are peddling of their venom among these ignorant creatures, stirring up the bad blood of the human heart and arraying them against us as a class. . . . We do not want the negro driven off. We do not want him interfered with as he is. We want him to have every right, civil and religious, that the laws of

the country give him. We will treat him kind on account of the memories of the past; we will cherish, protect and defend him; but we cannot forget that he is human and weak, that devilish malignity may drive him mad; he may attempt our ruin; and we will throw around our homes and firesides the sympathies of Anglo-Saxon protection and laugh at the folly of the Kellys and the Wilsons. Shall we set the ball in motion? Shall we try a colony of five hundred? One thousand dollars will test the experiment. What say our solid men?¹²⁵

The following year, complaining again of the planters' tribulations associated with emancipation, DeBow's Review said:

Did the tide of emigration set towards the Southern States, instead of from them, these evils would be remedied. Labor would be cheapened, lands would increase in value, and cotton raising would once more become remunerative. We want men of capital to come among us, and introduce white labor.¹²⁶

South Carolina set up a Bureau of Immigration which, by the beginning of 1868, had registered for sale 311,272 acres owned by 125 proprietors, mostly for \$3 to \$8 per acre. The Commissioner reported actual sale of two plantations to Northern parties, one of them "settled by the proprietors with a small colony of Germans." Summing up the activities of his agency which advertised in German and Irish papers in New York, and sent agents and advertising to Ireland, Germany and Scandinavia, the Commissioner said, "It will be seen from the above that our success is very limited."¹²⁷

Experience with European immigrants commonly was dashing to hopes. In 1867, with an air of resignation, the Southern Cultivator said:

All the laborers whose labor is worth having perfectly understand our situation. A few weeks ago, about 300 Germans landed in New Orleans. Why can we no longer keep those laborers among us? asked a city contemporary. The humblest man among them would have told him that the existence of slavery heretofore in the South, has repelled free labor; that they have hence no friends in the South, but many in Western Texas, Missouri, &c. . . . It is useless for our planters to turn to Germany. No country in Europe has a peasantry so sturdily fond of social independence. They clanise, but they will not labor in gangs--not even in the west; certainly not in cotton fields.

After commending the industry, frugality, and temperance of the Germans, the article made the same observation that were they "to work two years

on a plantation, they would be 'mity apt' to own it--especially if its owner carried it on in the flush style of the good old time."¹²⁸

Of course, some believed that the coming of immigrants to farm for themselves would be a benefit to the South, but this was not the planters' usual viewpoint. What the planters wanted was a substitute for the discipline of slavery for their freedmen laborers. If Europeans became independent farmers they would not furnish that substitute. Neither would they furnish it, the planters feared, even as laborers on the plantations. They would be discontented and could not be controlled.

They will not be satisfied with the wages that we are accustomed to pay for labor at the South. The quarters for the accommodation of the laborers which we now have will not satisfy them, and will be of little use to their owners, and therefore the millions invested in them will be a clear loss. These are only a few of the many causes of dissatisfaction, discontent and disappointment that will be encountered in the introduction of foreigners into this country, to supply the place of the negro. Is it wise, then, at this juncture, when society at the South is upheaved by recent social and political convulsions of the most trying character, to introduce among us, an element which may be difficult to control and may add much to our troubles? Is it expected that these foreigners when introduced amongst us are to be on a level with the intelligent respectable white people of the South, without any knowledge of their past history or antecedents? If the white man does not receive them on terms of equality, will they not be forced to affiliate with the negro? And in the latter contingency, will our condition be bettered?¹²⁹

Fears that European immigrants would not remain on the plantations as laborers was matched by fears that they might instigate strikes if they did.

A distinguished planter in the Southern Cultivator said, in 1869:

The European immigrant will compete with the labor we now have, or he will labor with those we now have to lessen their profits, and bring about a state of things which will get up strikes. You must recollect, a strike in the cotton or harvest field, is not like one in a cotton mill or on a railroad. If the mill stops, what has been done is not lost--if the hands refuse to move any more dirt, what has been, remains. Not so with wheat and cotton--all is lost, unless you continue to advance. The guano must be pumped up into the cotton bolls, and they must be gathered by uninterrupted labor.

If laborers from Europe offered insufficient assurance of an effective competition to hold the freedmen to their work on terms satisfactory to the planters, perhaps there was greater hope from another quarter. In California, laborers were arriving in numbers from China. Southern planters grasped at the prospect. In 1869, the year when completion of the transcontinental railroad connected this western source with East and South, the Southern Cultivator published a letter which said bluntly: "If we invite foreign emigrants at all, let them come from China, as laborers for wages, under the supervision of Southern planters."¹³⁰

The proposal was followed up at once. In 1870 a conference was held at Memphis for the purpose of arranging importation of Chinese laborers to the plantations, either from California or direct from China. Some laborers actually came, but the wages and conditions were not sufficiently attractive to the Chinese to maintain an influx to the South. The Chinese, it was hoped, would provide labor competition. In 1867, an article in the Cultivator declared:

The negro possesses a sort of monopoly, not only of political rights but of labor. He can do or not do as best pleases him. The only remedy I know against monopolies, is COMPETITION! and competition we must have against the negro monopoly. He must be taught that he is not indispensable to the well being or existence of the country before he will become serviceable. Enough labor must be introduced from abroad to bring about this favorable result. From whence then, are the laborers to come? . . . The next question to be considered after the proposition can he work, is will he work? There is but one place that I know of, where the Chinaman has been brought into contact, in great bodies, with Americans, and that is in California; and there his record is decidedly good.

The fact that white laborers in California bitterly opposed the Chinese was cited as proof that the latter could be relied upon to compete stiffly with the Negro. The article noted:

In the late political canvass, in California, both parties agreed upon the single proposition, that the further introduction of Chinese into the State, was detrimental to the interests of the white laborers; that it reduced wages, &c. This we can easily see was a party electioneering dodge to catch the mob, which never wishes to work, or, if compelled to do so, wants to do it in the least number of hours and at a high price. The inference I would draw is, that the Chinese

influence is decidedly felt in that State amongst the laboring classes. John takes Paddy's place on the railroad, and Biddy's situation in the kitchen. Is it not desirable that we should have some one to relieve Sambo and Dinah of their present onerous duties?¹³¹

The following year, a writer in the Southern Cultivator, discussing a joint-stock association to import Chinese, said that the office of agent in Hong Kong "might well be filled by some of the missionary laborers, who are now compelled to seek secular employment for support, in the absence of adequate aid from our poor impoverished South." To the writer there seemed no conflict between the interests of recruiting a competing labor supply and those of advancing religion. He pointed out:

In such a work as this, they will place a large number of heathens within the reach of the Gospel, ten times more than they will ever be able to convert in the present mode . . . I beg to call the attention of the Southern religious press to this subject, and ask their cooperation in this important work . . . I am satisfied that the introduction of the Chinese will work a beneficial effect upon the negro. The planters, then being independent of the negro, could take him or not, and he would soon see that his subsistence depends entirely upon his good behavior.

To make the mutuality of interests of all concerned complete, including the Negro, a Georgia correspondent of the Southern Cultivator added his opinion in 1869 that "It is desirable, in his own interest, that the negro should continue industrious, but what security is there that he will, and how is this to be best insured?" The writer provided his own answer: "The introduction of another race, equally capable of laboring under a Southern sun, though comparatively few in numbers, would, by the operation of the spirit of competition, effect the desired object, to the mutual advantage of all parties." The Chinese, it appeared, had all the qualities which it was desired to instill into the Negro. The Chinese, continued the letter, "are early risers, industrious and intelligent. After a short time, they acquire English enough to make themselves understood. They are a peaceable race, and never meddle with politics abroad."

The situation was urgent in the view of those who discussed the question in the Southern Cultivator, and all were in favor of bringing Chinese, with none opposed. The Georgia correspondent wrote:

The opportunity of introducing Chinese laborers should not be lost, as it may not recur . . . and experience in the West India Islands shows that free negro labor yearly deteriorates, and that Coolie labor there was necessary, not only to stimulate the negro, but to supply deficient labor. The preservation of cotton in the South, may depend on its securing, while it can, another race of laborers, and thus avoid those numerous strikes which are almost sure to follow, without them.¹³²

The Chinese were not only the kind of laborers these planters wanted, but their numbers were unlimited. One enthusiastic South Carolina correspondent in 1870 wrote:

I say let them come--the more the better. We don't need them by the thousands or few millions, but the hundreds of millions. The South, from Mason & Dixon's line to Mexico, would profitably employ, perhaps 250 millions. Let them come, and the sooner the better. They will probably do the work that the freedmen won't do and the white man can't do.¹³³

In gleeful anticipation of the effect of a Chinese influx on the Negroes a southern newspaper prophesied: "The tune then will be not 'forty acres and a mule,' but it will be 'work nigger or starve.'"¹³⁴

Reports appeared in DeBow's Review in 1867 that Chinese actually were coming to the South. For example:

The States of Mississippi and Louisiana have moved in the matter of Coolie labor. AH YOU, a Commissioner from the Chinese Government, has introduced a goodly number into these States, and has contracts from Alabama and Texas planters for 5,000 more, to arrive within a few months. We learn from the New York Times that planters "expect to profit greatly by the introduction of this class of labor, to supply the place of the women and children of the freedmen who are now supported by their husbands and fathers, attending schools instead of working as field hands, as they did when slaves."¹³⁵

Southern opinion was not uniformly in favor of Chinese immigration, however; indeed, it probably was weighted against it. The New Orleans Picayune, favoring break-up of plantation lands, remarked that "Some, who yet cling to the idea of wielding the products of large bodies of lands, desire only laborers, and if not able to get white men, are willing to take Chinese, Hindoos or any other sort of people, out of whom labor can be bought or coaxed."¹³⁶

More outspoken was another comment in DeBow's Review:

It has been suggested by many that the Coolie should be imported to take the place of the labor that has been lost. Would you go through another abolition after a term of years? But the price of a good healthy Chinaman is from \$150 to \$300 to import, besides his wages, which are over a hundred dollars a year. They are said to be good, steady laborers, but vicious and dirtily immoral. And then there is this besides in the way of such a project, that the policy of the General Government is totally opposed to it, the introduction of new races bound to service and labor being contrary to the true interest and laws of the United States. It would certainly be contrary to the true interests of South Carolina to yet more multiply the variety of races in her inhabitants.¹³⁷

Similarly,

Worse than all, deteriorating to the white, destructive to the black, would be the extensive introduction of coolies. We may assist ourselves at present, but, in the end, to add one inferior race to another would injure both and assist neither.¹³⁸

There were some who believed that no immigrants would come to the South, even the Chinese. As a correspondent from Alabama wrote in 1869:

I am sorry . . . to see there are some . . . who still cling to the idea that we have not laborers enough, and are caught by the plausible views of Yankee coolie speculators. We are not prepared for the Chinese, or any other laborers, from foreign countries. They are not like the negro, who is satisfied with plenty of "hog and hominy," and a shelter to turn the rain.¹³⁹

Those who held this opinion proved to be right. Neither Europeans nor Chinese came in the numbers contemplated and hoped for; the Chinese came hardly at all.

The key to an understanding of the views of southern planters is their practically unvarying belief that the best way to control labor is to increase the supply of laborers relative to the demand. "Let no one say then, that because the limited supply of labor is beneficial to a favored few, it is a blessing to the country at large," wrote a correspondent to the Southern Cultivator in 1870. Then followed a statement that flooding the labor market would improve the morals of planters: it would spare them an unseemly scramble for laborers among themselves.

It is not so much to the presence of a degraded class among us, as to their paucity, that the corruption of Southern society is due. The

services of the laborer is to the southern planter a necessity, and to procure them a contest is waged, in which not only the delicate courtesy of refined society is disregarded, but even honour is often sacrificed with this excuse only to conscience, that such sacrifices are necessary.

This protest against planters who competed for laborers continued:

Deceit, cajolery, and all the arts necessary to entice the laborer are freely resorted to . . . and if there is a neighborhood free from such influences, and which has not seen old ties severed and pleasant relations disturbed, it is peculiarly blessed. Not only the middle class, but men of high standing and former integrity, suffer themselves to be borne along in the current. When men of intelligence and refinement compromise themselves in this way, the intellect is called upon to justify the practice, and the philosophy of the age becomes corrupted. Sects of practicalists and expedientists spring up, to pollute the very fountains of social purity, and corrupt youth.¹⁴⁰

To this view, one who signed himself an "Ex-Confed." from Alabama, gave prompt assent. Without reference to any violation of gentlemen's codes of ethics, he stated the matter as he saw it, in terms of naked economic interest. He wrote:

As long as labor is allowed to control capital, so long will the profits of that labor be small, or zero. We must combine in self defense, as there is a combination of laborers against us. But this is almost impossible. There is only one remedy in my humble opinion, and that is to so flood the country with laborers, that they shall exceed the demand.¹⁴¹

By this touchstone of its effect on the balance between supply and demand, all issues of policy were to be judged.

Six years after emancipation the magazine, Galaxy, carried a statement of planters' views of agricultural labor to which its author, "Southerner," had given much thought.¹⁴² He laid down as his first principle, that the southern planter "is compelled by force of circumstances to depend almost entirely for labor . . . upon the freedmen."¹⁴³ There was no practicable alternative. On the one hand, the "prospect of remedying their deficiencies by the introduction of Chinese or Swedish laborers [was] remote."¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, it "would be vastly to the detriment of Southern society not to employ the freedmen, considering their natural

propensities, and that they actually inhabit the land in such numbers."¹⁴⁵ Apparently the author had in mind the instability and possible disorders among so large a resident population, if unemployed and unsupervised. Therefore, "with all their faults . . . they must be accepted at present as the cultivators of our Southern soil."¹⁴⁶

The list of faults "was long," and these were ascribed partly to "the peculiar nature of the Negro," and partly to the changes produced by the war.¹⁴⁷

The freedmen, in "Southerner's" view, were "indolent," "improvident," "thievish and mendacious," "suspicious and distrustful." These traits were regarded as largely recent in origin; they "had grown upon him largely since the war, owing mainly to the secret teachings of partisan leaders and scheming politicians."¹⁴⁸

Other unfavorable traits were of longer standing. The freedman was "ignorant and stupid," "careless," marked by "moral unreliability," and unless "thoroughly trained" could never be "left to the guidance of his own judgment." At the same time, "cheerfulness is one of his distinguishing characteristics," "Nature has bestowed upon him in no ordinary manner the gift of melody [and the] impressibility of his soul gives the appearance in him of a natural bias toward religion."¹⁴⁹

Against this background analysis, "Southerner" stated the crux of the planters' problem:

In one respect, more than in any other, the system of labor now practiced at the South differs from the ante-war method of agriculture, and it is this--that every one must "hire hands."¹⁵⁰

Every agriculturist, owner or renter, resident or absentee with overseer, wealthy or very poor [is] compelled each year to hire hands to work for him. No contract lasts longer than one year; and as each year draws to a close, every planter seriously and eagerly seeks to secure the necessary laborers for the ensuing crop.¹⁵¹

Emancipation had shifted the balance of power away from the master's previous complete control of labor through ownership of the laborer. It created in its place a more fluid labor market. Where control of labor had followed sale and purchase of the laborer and only the decisions of property owners counted, now the laborers' decisions must be set

alongside employers' decisions. "Southerner" realized the import of this difference to planters and described it:

The employer or his overseer, though giving good wages, by persuasion, begging, or complimentary encouragement, has to induce the freedmen to work. Often he possesses no power of coercion and cannot even attempt its exercise. All he can do is to control his freedmen by moral influence, persuasion or example; get an overseer or agent to look after the hands, or dock each freedman for every half hour of lost time. A threat to discharge, or even a discharge itself, would prove of little avail, because in the first place the laborer is wanted, and in the second place he could readily procure another situation.¹⁵²

The decisions of the laborers brought change and fluidity. Women largely withdrew themselves from the labor market. Previously, planters had "reckoned" women field hands at "about two-thirds of a 'full hand.'" Now Negro women had become "more unmanageable than men." Besides the "washing," "household duties," and tending the "maternal cares," they "decline such strenuous exertions, deeming themselves entitled to this exemption" from field labor.¹⁵³ With freedom, male and female alike could move; moving from place to place was a visible assertion of the new freedom.

Migratory and fond of change, sure of a home whenever willing to work on account of the great demand for farm labor, the freedman manifests a singular indifference to contracting, and many of them rarely live two years in succession on the same place. It seldom or never occurs that a man works exactly the same force in different years both as to numbers and individuals.¹⁵⁴

New conditions evoked new morals; old codes observed by both freedmen and their employers were casualties of emancipation and the rise of a free labor market, in "Southerner's" view. The freedman, he said, with exceptions, "appears never to conceive that his contract places him under a moral obligation to labor faithfully; on the contrary, he seems to imagine it his moral duty to himself to avoid labor as much as possible. Toil has been with him so much a matter of compulsion . . ."¹⁵⁵ Among planters the premium of success no longer rested so surely on old virtues: "It is not always the rich man, nor the trustworthy man, nor the energetic man who is sure to obtain hands; not the man of undoubted veracity, of

A further disadvantage to the planter from a contractual "partnership between capital and labor under the new regime," according to "Southerner," was the unwillingness of freedmen to "interest themselves in any manner about the general welfare of the plantation." Specifically, he spoke of their unwillingness to perform maintenance work outside their own particular crop as an "act of special favor" and except for pay. The work consisted of such activities as splitting rails, repairing fences, or cleaning ditches. "Southerner" said:

Thus it is . . . that, for want of sufficient hands and sufficient control over those employed, the splendid plantations of many owners are going to ruin, or deteriorating rapidly in value, or being sold at far less than their value, or being turned out as wild land to save the payment of the heavy taxes imposed by Government. This is a sad yet true picture.¹⁶¹

Despite this unfavorable reading by "Southerner" on the balance between employer and employed in the new free labor market, he saw no practicable alternative but to proceed to engage freedmen under one form of agreement or another. "In general a planter will hire any able-bodied hand that offers himself, for, to say nothing of the scarcity of laborers, all are more or less dishonest and require watching; the chief subjects of inquiry are, Can he and will he work well?"¹⁶²

In other words, there was little difference between one worker and another, workers were scarce, and the planter needed workers to maintain a productive plantation. He was not really free to "sit still with folded hands and gaze upon vacant fields, idle mules, and empty cabins." With "a family to support and debts to pay," on one hand, and with a belief that "at fair prices and with good management there is money in raising cotton," on the other hand, the planter was now obliged to take steps to attract laborers, i.e. to recruit them himself in the labor market. So he "mounts his horse and rides hither and thither, sends an agent back and forth day after day, announces his willingness to make liberal contracts, does make large offers, bribes his own hands to hire others for him, goes to the towns and villages and addresses the many colored loiterers on the streets, stops at railway stations and sounds the freedmen he always finds strolling near, and thus by one means and another gradually obtains as many hands as he wants, or failing in that, as many as he can."¹⁶³

Throughout, the planter's hard alternative, as he described it, came close to this: he could not get along with the freedmen, and he could not get along without them. Once the season started, he faced immediate tasks of finding ways to manage his laborers.

With such hands as he is able to retain, or by persuasion, cajolery, or fair bargains obtain, the planter begins the year's work and prepares for planting. . . .¹⁶⁴

Praise and encouragement are the best incentives to freedmen under the present system. Force cannot be used, and threats of expulsion are useless, for his services are too greatly needed.¹⁶⁵

"Southerner" offered suggestions for an improved future. One of these was removal or neutralization of political influences disturbing the freedmen:

Could the freedmen be entirely weaned from politics and be undisturbed by partisan leaders, it is more than likely that they would gradually settle down into a body of laborers, taken as a mass, better than any on earth. It is to the planters' interest to be friendly to his freedmen and to make them aware of that fact, and gradually he is creating that impression and gaining their confidence. If political tricksters will but permit this confidence to grow up and continue, cease to prejudice the blacks against the whites, and abandon the wicked and false assertion that whites are the enemies of the blacks at the South, then the relations between the two races will become agreeable, mutually profitable, and highly advantageous to Southern agriculture.¹⁶⁶

Further improvement could come, thought "Southerner," if competition between planters for the services of laborers could be restrained, either by voluntary agreement among themselves, or by imposing legal restraints upon them:

Without delay all Southern planters should agree upon some general plan of hiring, some well-understood rate of wages, and some mode of discovering and punishing delinquent laborers. There should be an entire stop put to the custom, now common and considered not altogether unfair, of enticing another man's laborers from him by offering higher wages. A trespass law of general application is needed, which will prevent strange freedmen from intruding upon the premises of others, engaging in mischief, stealing, or tempting the laborers to leave their employers and contract with some one else. Night traffic in districts entirely rural should be prohibited by law, for it opens the door to more petty thefts and drunkenness than all other causes combined.¹⁶⁷

Share-cropping offered discouraging prospects to both planter and laborer, in "Southerner's" opinion. "The system of partnership farming must be abandoned, and the custom of allowing private crops to hired hands must be done away with entirely; the two practices are in the highest degree detrimental to Southern prosperity and to the efficiency and honesty of the freedmen."¹⁶⁸

"Southerner" favored outright tenancy over the various forms of sharecropping. The former placed responsibility for management squarely on the tenant; the latter left responsibility squarely but uneasily on the planter. Share tenancy on "thirds and fourths" was preferred--a third of the corn and a fourth of the cotton to the landlord. This was best for the planter since it "saves him much trouble and responsibility" and "leaves the sole management of the crop to the freedman," giving the planter a lien on the crop as security. At this point "Southerner" modified generalizations about freedmen and made an important distinction among them. It "would not do to trust all freedmen as much as this. Only those who possess a good character, a degree of diligence, and a fair knowledge of farming can be so trusted."¹⁶⁹

The feeling never left "Southerner" that he understood the Negro, knew what was best for both races, and could surmount the difficulties of the time. The basis of the agricultural system of the South, he said,

. . . is an unreliable and unsteady race, yet a race trained to labor, accustomed to the control of white men, in the main obedient and respectful. The wonder is that Southerners have been able to do with them as well as has really been the case. If it were not that the majority of Southern planters understand negro nature, and, urged by dire necessity, bend every energy to make available the services of the freedmen, dark indeed would be the industrial picture of the South. But as it is, accepting the stern logic of facts, the Southern planters do manage to make respectable crops with their negro laborers. . . .¹⁷⁰

Notwithstanding all their faults, the freedmen, by mere force of habit and incited by the hope of reward, have struggled on in a more harum-scarum, thriftless manner than is permitted to any other set of hired laborers on the globe; and after all, thanks to a generous climate and to a free use of fertilizers, and guided by the strong sense and experience of their employers, have made a very fair crop. The corn has been gathered and housed, but not accompanied by those glorious corn-shuckings that once aroused all the mirth, melody, and merrymaking qualities of the negro.¹⁷¹

But the scarcely relieved and continuous abrasiveness of labor relations under freedom apparently was proving wearing upon "Southerner." He looked to a future of smaller farms with reduced responsibilities for management, and these shifted largely from planters to tenants:

Large farmers must gradually give way to a greater number of smaller ones, and large landowners must divide up their lands and rent them to such as may become permanent tenants, rather than endeavor at great risk and trouble to carry on large and expensive planting interests.¹⁷²

To assist in this transformation of southern agriculture, white immigrants would be welcomed, provided they came with money to invest in land, and with other necessary qualifications:

To immigrants the South offers many and strong inducements, for the lands are rich and cheap, and the highest price is paid for produce of all kinds. Contrary to general supposition abroad, new-comers who cast-in their lot with the country, and with money, energy, and industry endeavor to aid in its recuperation, are cordially welcomed and kindly treated. Very many stories concerning what is denominated Ku-Klux are fabrications, for truly disturbances are very rare in the cotton states at present, and the future historian will write with surprise of the sensation created by such a mythical bugbear.¹⁷³

Despite the skepticism with which southern planters greeted the prospect of a free labor system for Negroes, and despite repeated depreciation of the Negro as a laborer after emancipation, the new regime did produce more cotton than generally was anticipated. The Nashville Press and Times, reporting on local production in 1866, said that "the experiment of free labor (we beg pardon for the phrase), has been crowned with perfect success throughout Tennessee wherever it has been applied to the production of cotton, as every cotton merchant will testify."¹⁷⁴

The Englishman Somers observed while visiting the South in 1870-71, that:

The system of free labor has been attended with a degree of success to which the planters themselves are the most forward of all in the southern community to bear testimony. . . . I can scarcely recall an instance in which any planter or other employer of negro labour has not said that the result of emancipation, in its industrial bearings, has been much more favourable than could have been anticipated, or who has not added an expression of satisfaction that slavery, however roughly, has been finally effaced.¹⁷⁵

So the freedman, as a laborer, gradually became acceptable, if not praiseworthy. Accepted, he in turn gave his acceptance to the freedman's role assigned to him by his employers and worked within it. At the close of the 1880's, in a series of books entitled "Questions of the Day," one was published on "The Plantation Negro as a Freeman." It was a small and revealing volume by Philip Bruce, the distinguished historian of Virginia, who, for the purpose, turned from student of the past to observer of the contemporary. His volume furnishes a good description of plantation labor, as seen at that time by the whites, a quarter century after emancipation.

The reason why emancipation was followed by less disorganization than expected, wrote Bruce, was "simply because those habits of industry which slavery had created came to the aid of the freedmen when they found that they had to work or starve."¹⁷⁶ As in the days of slavery, "an uninterrupted superintendence . . . is necessary to their activity irrespective of age."¹⁷⁷ The freedman did "not fear his employer as much as he did his master," and as laborers the new generation were very inexpert "because their employers cannot enforce the degree of discipline necessary to instruct them."¹⁷⁸

Bruce noted the beginnings of mobility among plantation laborers. Freedom had given them a choice between opportunities, a choice they could exercise by changing places at year's end, or earlier. Even "the most respectable negroes, who were trained under the regime of slavery," he observed with regret over the demoralization, "will disregard a contract if it conflicts with their interest or caprice."¹⁷⁹ It was "not surprising," thought Bruce, that the new generation was "inferior in steadiness, even under supervision, to the laborer who was once habituated to the restraints of slavery."¹⁸⁰

Large planters preferred to engage only Negroes as hands. This preference was "chiefly ascribable," explained Bruce,

. . . to the perfect contentment of the negroes under circumstances that excite in white laborers the profoundest dissatisfaction. . . . While the negro will go to bed contentedly when he can see the sky through a hole in the roof, and eat his dinner from a tin bucket when

sitting on a clod, the white laborer is captious and resentful, complains of his wages, his quarters, and indeed of every condition under which he lives. Nearly all of the latter's serious faults as a laborer proceed from pride and a desire for a better position, and all the merits of the negro from a total absence of either. . . .¹⁸¹ [The Negro] is more cheerful and more easily managed; . . . and has no sentiment or pride that will prevent him from seeking any kind of employment, however disagreeable that employment may be to ordinary sensibilities, or in what degraded situations, it may place him.¹⁸²

Only those who were prepared to remain in laborer's status, and to accept its meager rewards uncomplainingly, were really satisfactory.

The same qualities that enabled Negroes to compete so successfully against native white laborers--"because no such laborer is content to live on the same humble plane of existence"--enabled him also to compete against immigrant Europeans.¹⁸³ The same amount of wages on which the negro can subsist with ease would not procure for the immigrant workingman what he considers to be the barest necessities of life," wrote Bruce.¹⁸⁴

As unions among industrial workers became more common in the north, one characteristic of the Negro laborer began to be regarded with increasing favor by his employer, viz., "his natural and unconscious conservatism." Bruce apprehended that:

The only danger lies in the possibility of his becoming the ignorant tool of white-labor organizations. . . . Strikes are unknown among them, because they are happy and contented if they can secure the bare necessities of life and also because they have no disposition to organize and cooperate of their own motion, even to attain an object that will redound to the advantage of all. Their inclination is not to rebel for the purpose of extorting higher wages for their services, but rather to earn those wages with as little physical exertion as possible.¹⁸⁵

This conservative spirit, observed Bruce, explains the Negro laborers':

. . . strong hold upon the good-will of the large planter, who, although he may express an unfavorable opinion of them in many of the relations of life, yet readily acknowledges their value to him as laborers . . . [and] will yet earnestly deprecate any movement that looks to their emigration in great numbers.¹⁸⁶

This mutual dependence of large planter and Negro laborer, felt Bruce, "is an assurance that the negro is treated with substantial justice."¹⁸⁷

For all Bruce's confidence in the Negroes' resistance to striking, there was a touch of uncertainty in the minds of planters. In 1887, only

two years before Bruce wrote, the Southern Cultivator had reported that "the sugar plantations in Louisiana are troubled with strikes on the part of Negro laborers who have formed lodges of Knights of Labor in that State . . ."188

Bruce's warning estimate of the freedmen's future in the South concluded:

It is only as a workingman that he adds to the wealth and augments the general prosperity of the community. . . . If he were to lose his efficiency as such, or were to show any desire to disorganize labor, then his only element of usefulness to the landowners and to society would be destroyed. . . . His standing in the community, while he remains in it, will be secure as long as he is docile, industrious, and conservative . . .189

Southern planters knew that change was possible, whether they desired it or not, and they were fearful. They had just seen one seemingly permanent labor system swept away. In his column on "Thoughts for the Month" in January 1886, the editor of the Southern Cultivator took one glance backward and then another forward. He wrote:

While we cherish and cling to this peculiar Southern civilization, there is one change in our affairs which the red hand of war has wrought and which will not be restored. Slaves have been changed to free laborers--the peaceful alliance between labor and capital consequent on slavery has given place to a system which involves antagonism. This antagonism has not yet reached very alarming proportions with us, but it is growing and will grow.¹⁹⁰

If only the freedmen would hold to a conservatism that would provide the outward stability and acceptance of a slave labor system--this was the planters' hope. There was small welcome or willingness to prepare for change. Their outlook was oriented toward the past, with fears for the future.

At the beginning of freedom, Major General Carl Schurz had written:

The emancipation of the slaves is submitted to only in so far as chattel slavery in the old form could not be kept up. But although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society, and all independent State legislation will share the tendency to make him such. The ordinances abolishing slavery passed by the conventions under the pressure of circumstances, will not be looked upon as barring the establishment of a new form of servitude.¹⁹¹

Schurz' description of 1866 fitted 1886 just about as well.

FOOTNOTES

¹Pages 199-106.

²USDA Land Policy Review, VI, 3-17; Agricultural History, XXVIII, 1-21.

³(1904) Paul S. Peirce, "Freedmen's Bureau, A Chapter in the History of Reconstruction," State University of Iowa, Studies in Sociology, Economics, Politics, and History, III. 200 pages.

(1924) Alreutheus Ambush Taylor, "South Carolina Negro During Reconstruction."

(1937) Marjorie Stratford Mendenhall, "Rise of Southern Tenancy," Yale Review, XXVI, 110-129.

(1941) LaWanda F. Cox, "Agricultural Labor in the United States, 1865-1900, with Special Reference to the South," doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

(1942) C. W. Tebeau, "Visitors' Views of Georgia Politics and Life, 1865-1880," Georgia Historical Quarterly, XXVI, 1-15.

(1943) Rosser H. Taylor, "Post-bellum Rental Contracts," Agricultural History, XVII, 121-124.

(1944) LaWanda F. Cox, "Tenancy in the United States, 1865-1900: A Consideration of the Validity of the Agricultural Ladder Hypothesis," Agricultural History, XXIII, 97-104.

(1947) George B. Tindall, "South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900." Vernon Lane Wharton, "Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890." James Sprunt, Studies in History and Political Science. Chapel Hill. 298 pages.

(1948) LaWanda F. Cox, "American Agricultural Wage Earner, 1865-1900," Agricultural History, XXVII, 95-113.

(1949) John Cornelius Engelsman, "Freedmen's Bureau of Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXXII, 145-224.

(1952) Henderson H. Donald, "Negro Freedmen." Claude Elliott, "Freedmen's Bureau in Texas." Southwestern Historical Quarterly, LV, 1-24.

(1955) William F. Highsmith, "Louisiana Land Holding During War and Reconstruction," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXXVIII, 39-54.

(1956) Theodore Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture and the Problems of Readjustment, 1865-1877," Agricultural History, XXX, 58-76.

(1958) LaWanda F. Cox, "Promise of Land for the Freedmen," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLV, 413-440.

(1960) Joe M. Richardson, "Freedmen's Bureau and Negro Labor in Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly, XXXIX, 167-174. Theodore Saloutos, "Farmer Movements in the South, 1865-1933," University of California Publications in History, LXIV, 13-20.

(1962) Joe M. Richardson, "Northern Reports on Florida: 1866," Florida Historical Quarterly, XL, 381-390.

(1963) Joe M. Richardson, "An Evaluation of the Freedmen's Bureau in Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly, XLI, 223-238.

(1965) Joel Williamson, After Slavery. Chapel Hill.

(1966) Patricia E. Sheehan, From Slavery to Freedom: Negroes in Civil War Virginia, 1861-1865, paper prepared for Seminar of Professor Leon F. Litwack, University of California, Berkeley.

⁴"Report on the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana," S. Doc. No. 17, 39th Cong., 1st sess., 37, 38, Ser. 1237 (1865-66), cited hereafter as Schurz, Report.

⁵Southern Cultivator (Memphis), XXVIII, 132 (1870), cited hereafter as S.C.

⁶Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction. House Report 30, 39th Cong., 1st sess., Pt. 4, 149. Ser. 1273, cited hereafter as Joint Com. Recons.

⁷More knowledge of the age composition of slaves at time of departure from Africa could throw light on the nature and problems of their acculturation to white American society, and especially to the discipline of the plantation.

⁸Walter L. Fleming, Documentary History of Reconstruction: Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational and Industrial, 1865 to the Present Time, 2 Vols., Cleveland, 1906, I, 63, cited hereafter as Fleming, Doc. Hist.

⁹Commissioner of Agriculture of Georgia, Annual Report, 1875, p. 71.

¹⁰Schurz, Report, p. 15.

¹¹DeBow's Review, devoted to the restoration of the southern states, and the development of the wealth and resources of the country "The Question of the Freedmen." After the War Series, I, p. 92; see, also, p. 550. (1866), cited hereafter as DeBow.

¹²General O. O. Howard said, in an address at Cooper Institute: "The war is over and all the chains of slavery are broken. The Southern people are naturally bitter and prejudiced, and will not be brought in a day to love that which they hated. They give up slavery inch by inch, and will not give it up until compelled to by freedom itself. Their whole idea is compulsory, and they still desire to control the slave. They do so avowedly, and the fact is patent to every observing man." DeBow, I, 324.

¹³DeBow, I, 72, 73.

¹⁴Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, 2 Vols. (Washington: 1933), pp. 481-483, 531.

¹⁵Annual Report of the U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture. . . for the year 1871, pp. 71-72.

- ¹⁶DeBow, VII, 558 (1869).
- ¹⁷Fleming, Doc. Hist., I, 270, 271.
- ¹⁸Cf. Philip A. Bruce, "Social and Economic Revolution in the Southern States," Contemporary Review (July 1900), 59.
- ¹⁹Fleming, Doc. Hist., I, 248.
- ²⁰Ibid., I, 247.
- ²¹Ibid., I, 249-250.
- ²²Moorfield Storey, Charles Sumner (Boston: 1900), p. 288.
- ²³Quoted in James G. Blaine, Twenty Years in Congress, II, 129 (1886).
- ²⁴Speech of Richard H. Dana, Jr., at a meeting of citizens held in Faneuil Hall, June 21, 1865, to consider the subject of the reorganization of the rebel states. Pamphlets on Reconstruction, Pamphlet No. 9 (Berkeley: University of California Library).
- ²⁵Alfred Holt Stone, "Mississippi's Constitution and Statutes in Reference to Freedmen, and Their Alleged Relation to the Reconstruction Acts and War Amendments," IV, 173. Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society, 1901.
- ²⁶DeBow, IV, 272.
- ²⁷DeBow, V, 212-213.
- ²⁸General O. O. Howard, House Ex. Doc. 1, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 499, 500 (1869).
- ²⁹Sidney Andrews, "South Since the War, As Shown By Fourteen Weeks of Travel and Observation," 98 (Boston: 1866), quoted in Martin Abbott, "Free Land, Free Labor, and the Freedmen's Bureau," Agricultural History, XXX (1956), 154.
- ³⁰Quoted in W. K. Boyd, "William W. Holden," Publications of Historical Society of Trinity College, Series III, Part III, pp. 101-102 (1899).
- ³¹Circular No. 1, issued by Freedmen's Bureau, July 1, 1865. Ex. Doc. No. 70, 10, 11, 39th Cong., 1st sess.
- ³²Joe M. Richardson (ed.), "A Northerner Reports in Florida: 1866," Florida Historical Quarterly, XL, 383.
- ³³Report of Benjamin C. Truman to President Andrew Johnson, 1866, S. Doc. 43, 39th Cong., 1st sess., 7, Ser. 1238, cited hereafter as Truman, Report.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Fleming, Doc. Hist., I, 251.

³⁶Message returning S. 60, February 19, 1866, S. Ex. Doc. 25, 5. 39th Cong., 1st sess. (1866).

³⁷DeBow, I, 8, 9. One report of such subdivision for white immigrants follows: "A farmer of Tyrrell county, North Carolina, being possessed of a large estate and not being able to obtain labor, adopted the following plan to induce laborers to cultivate it. He measured off ten lots of fifteen or twenty acres each, and built plain but comfortable cottages upon them. He then went to New York and easily obtained ten good men with families, having offered to settle them upon his estate upon the following conditions: They were to work for him at a fixed valuation for their services, for four days in each week, until their wages amounted to the value of their lots of land with the houses thereon. The other two days they worked on their own account, and this time was ample to cultivate whatever they could raise, the employer furnishing the teams they needed on those days The result of this contract was that the farmer's lands were better worked, and with less trouble to him than they had ever been, and he never made such crops before." DeBow, III, 478.

³⁸Treasurer of the U.S., Freedmen's Bureau, Ex. Doc. 70, 178. 39th Cong., 1st sess. (1866). Cited hereafter as Treasurer, Freedmen's Bur.

³⁹Joint Com. Recons., Pt. II, 230, 231.

⁴⁰Ibid., Pt. III, 182.

⁴¹Walter L. Fleming, Documents Relating to Reconstruction, 4, 5. Morgantown, West Virginia, 1904, No. 6. A recent historian writes that "a balanced evaluation of the Freedmen's Bureau . . . must stress its constructive achievements." Kenneth M. Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877, p. 134.

⁴²Treasurer, Freedmen's Bur., 313.

⁴³Truman, Report, 7.

⁴⁴In DeBow's Review, a Northern writer remarked that "The most reasonable men among the Southerners are the ex-Confederate officers--the men most interested in peace and good order are the land-holders, whose only resource is in the cultivation or sale of their lands; and it cannot be doubted that these two classes combined will, before another year, compel the more ignorant citizens to abate their prejudices, and if they do not cease to hate, at least cease to molest Northern settlers." He added, "I hope soon to see the scarcity of labor tending to proper treatment of the freedmen and to competition for their labor." DeBow, II, 139.

⁴⁵S.C., XXIII, 90 (1865).

⁴⁶DeBow, II, 111 (1866).

⁴⁷Joint Com. Recons., Pt. IV, 149.

⁴⁸S.C., XXIII, 90 (1865).

⁴⁹Ibid., 166. A year later General O. O. Howard said: "This cry about negroes not working first came from the South, and it is echoed here by editors and everybody else. The great majority of the negroes are at work, and in five years we shall be fairly on the road to material prosperity. Harmony between owners and laborers may be brought about in time without much progress. The military power can make it. I have said to Congress that education will go far toward it. This seems a plain proposition, and yet it is disputed. There is a fundamental prejudice existing there. They think the negroes were not intended by nature for education; that they will, if educated, be unfit for labor. . . . In Lynchburg I found a school taught by a colored man. I went there, being told that the negroes were in insurrection. They had raised 1,000 bushels of wheat, of which they were entitled to half, but the master had taken it all to pay expenses. . . . Whole regiments of them have learned to read, and I should not be surprised to hear that on every plantation at the South there are some of the people who know how to read. . . . Some time will be needed, but the leaven is working." DeBow, I, 324, 325 (1866).

⁵⁰Fleming, Doc. Hist., I, 267.

⁵¹Ibid., I, 248, 249.

⁵²S.C., XXIII, 134 (1865).

⁵³Schurz, Report, 23.

⁵⁴Ibid., 24.

⁵⁵Blaine, op. cit., II, 94.

⁵⁶Ibid., 130.

⁵⁷LaWanda F. Cox, "Agricultural Labor in the United States, 1865-1900: . . .", op. cit.

⁵⁸Ibid., 71.

⁵⁹Ibid., 73.

⁶⁰Storey, op. cit., 288.

⁶¹Fleming, Doc. Hist., I, 255, 256.

⁶²S. C., XXVII, 50, 51 (1869).

⁶³William A. Dunning, Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865-1877, 57, 58. Howard K. Beale, Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson, 194. Cited hereafter as Beale.

⁶⁴Beale, 194.

⁶⁵Stamp, op. cit., 80.

⁶⁶S.C., XXV, 10 (1867).

⁶⁷Ibid., XXXV, 50, 51 (1877).

⁶⁸Ibid., XXV, 69 (1867). In 1884 a writer to the Southern Cultivator restated this view: ". . . he instinctively seeks exemption from the control and management of the white man--avoids as far as possible all contact with the superior race, and covets nothing more than the secrecy and seclusion of a pole hut hid away on a branch in the jungle or forests more 'convenient to wood and water,' and screened from the observation of 'de spicious white man,' where with possibly a hopeless pig, the inevitable 'watermillion' patch, probably a few rows 'er taters' and collards and a patch of grass and cotton, scarcely any, or no corn, he is serene and content in his freedom, and happy in the consciousness of depriving 'de boss' of his labor." S.C., XLII, 362 (1884).

⁶⁹Ibid., XXVII, 302 (1869). The census fails to measure the movement of Negroes into either owner or tenant status until 1890. Even then, in reporting "tenants," the census fails to make the essential distinction between managing tenants on cash, share, or standing (i.e. specified quantity of crop) rental, on the one hand, and nonmanaging sharecroppers, on the other hand. In South Atlantic and South Central states combined, i.e. from Delaware to Texas, the 1890 census reported 91,420 Negro farm owners and 366,343 Negro tenants. Eleventh Census, 1890, XIII, 175.

⁷⁰S.C., XXV, 365 (1867).

⁷¹Ibid., XXVIII, 378 (1870).

⁷²Ibid., XXVII, 302 (1869).

⁷³Ibid., XLII, 117 (1884).

⁷⁴Transactions of Georgia State Agricultural Society, August 1876 to February 1878, 407. Atlanta, 1878. In 1884, under the title, "Things Ruinous to Farming," the Southern Cultivator carried an evaluation of experience with standing rent, i.e. "the almost universal custom of renting lands to negro tenants for a certain amount of lint cotton, and then letting the negro manage the farm according to his own judgment." Experience and observation have clearly demonstrated the fact, the writer said, "that the negro,

⁹⁶Somers, op. cit., 30, 31.

⁹⁷S.C., XXXIV, 419, 420 (1876).

⁹⁸Ibid., XXXV, 1, 2 (1877).

⁹⁹Ibid., 50, 51.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ibid., XXXVII, 1, 2 (1879).

¹⁰²Ibid., 3.

¹⁰³Ibid., XLV, 492 (1887). The reference to "tenant" system is ambiguous; historically, sharecropping was generally included as a form of "tenancy," although it is more accurately a form of "labor," merely substituting a share of the crop for cash wages.

¹⁰⁴DeBow, VI, 152.

¹⁰⁵S.C., XLII, 348 ff. (1884).

¹⁰⁶Ibid., XXV, 1 (1867).

¹⁰⁷Ibid., XXVI, 14 (1868).

¹⁰⁸Ibid., XLVII, 164 (1889).

¹⁰⁹Ibid., XXIII, 133 (1865).

¹¹⁰Ibid., XXV, 42 (1867).

¹¹¹Ibid., 140.

¹¹²Ibid., XXVI, 12 (1868).

¹¹³Ibid., 98, 133.

¹¹⁴Ibid., XXXVIII, 141 (1880).

¹¹⁵Ibid., XXIX, 253 (1871).

¹¹⁶Ibid., XLIV, 155 (1886).

¹¹⁷Ibid., XLVII, 165 (1889).

¹¹⁸Ibid., XXVIII, 379 (1870).

¹¹⁹Ibid., XXXV, 12 (1877).

- 120 Ibid., 2, 3.
- 121 Ibid., XXXV, 50, 51 (1877).
- 122 Ibid., XXVI, 47 (1868).
- 123 Ibid., 337.
- 124 DeBow, VI, 153, 154.
- 125 Ibid., III, 584, 585.
- 126 Ibid., VI, 153, 154.
- 127 Ibid., V, 208, 209.
- 128 S.C., XXV, 41 (1867).
- 129 Ibid., XXVII, 50 (1869).
- 130 Ibid., 281.
- 131 Ibid., XXV, 375 (1867).
- 132 Ibid., XXVII, 338 (1869).
- 133 Ibid., XXVIII, 15 (1870).
- 134 Robert S. Henry, Story of Reconstruction, 364. Indianapolis, 1938.
Cited hereafter as Henry, Recons.
- 135 DeBow, IV, 160. See, also, ibid., VII, 567, 568. The New York Evening Gazette carried this description of Chinese labor introduced from Cuba: "In Louisiana an attempt has been made to introduce Chinese laborers in the place of the negro. Dr. Kittridge has made the experiment on his plantation, and he states successfully. They were obtained from Cuba, and the agent furnishing them stated that the planters would not permit the best of these coolies to leave the island, paying them from \$15 to \$25 per month in gold, rather than part with their services. Dr. Kittridge allows them \$14 a month the year round. They don't mind the sun while at work, but when walking out on Sundays use red umbrellas and fans. Their color is a light copper, hair straight and black, like the Indians, some shaving the head on the sides and top, leaving a cue behind. They bathe often, and wear a white blouse, reaching to their hips, pants and hop shoes in dry weather, and when wet go barefoot. When working in the ditches or mud, they roll their pants above the knees. Their beds are made of matting, and the pillows blocks of wood, with blouses folded and laid on each. They use mosquito nets on their bedding, keeping the whole neat and in good order.
- "These coolies are abstemious people--simply half a pound of pork with one of rice constituting their rations. This allowance would not suit our

darkies. They abhor the luxury of the negro--corn-bread--and will almost starve before they touch it. They are fond of potatoes and vegetables, and will even cook weeds for greens, and really seem to be vegetarians. An opossum, stuffed with raisins and roasted, also suits the taste of these strange celestials.

"They are neat cooks, good gardeners, and ingenious, and whatever they do is done well, but not quickly. Those on the plantation speak Spanish, and a Creole manages them, acting as interpreter. They are always quiet, working steadily the whole day long, and peaceable and satisfied, without murmuring do whatever is required, working as freely in knee-deep ditch mud as in the field.

"They cut up every weed with great care (different from any gardeners), not permitting a blade to escape their notice; and with this caution, of course, they do not go ahead as fast as Sambo, who is much more careless in his task. Although it became necessary to work rapidly on account of the grass injuring the crop, the coolies could not be induced to slight their work. They worked among the sugar-cane with their fingers, pulling out all the grass and heaping the hills handsomely with their hoes." DeBow, IV, 362, 363.

¹³⁶Ibid., IV, 150.

¹³⁷Ibid., 102. See, also, "Science and the Mechanic Arts Against Coolies," Ibid., VII, 557-571.

¹³⁸Ibid., V, 541.

¹³⁹S.C., XXVII, 374 (1869).

¹⁴⁰Ibid., XXVIII, 132 (1870).

¹⁴¹Ibid., 141.

¹⁴²Southerner, "Agricultural Labor at the South." Galaxy, September, 1871, 328-340 (New York Public Library).

¹⁴³Ibid., 328.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 329.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 328.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 333, 328.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 328.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 329.

151 Ibid., 329.

152 Ibid., 332. For example, a colored author's corroborating words: "Emancipation has taken the mother from field-work to house-work." George W. Williams, History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens, II, 418.

153 Ibid., 328.

154 Ibid., 329.

155 Ibid., 332.

156 Ibid., 329.

157 Ibid., 329, 330.

158 Ibid., 331.

159 Ibid., 330.

160 Ibid., 331.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid., 330.

163 Ibid., 334.

164 Ibid., 336.

165 Ibid.

166 Ibid., 339.

167 Ibid.

168 Ibid.

169 Ibid., 334.

170 Ibid., 339.

171 Ibid., 337.

172 Ibid., 339.

173 Ibid., 340.

174 DeBow, I, 198. Pessimistic views are exemplified by two letters from Texas, one of these from Houston, reporting "that the negroes now

LOWNDES, ALABAMA (continued)

1395 Operator was a merchant.

1537 Operator was a minister.

1552 Operator was a blacksmith.

1622 Operator was a merchant.

Enumeration District 110 [farms 1626 to 1650]: In this district, the enumerator reversed the standard procedure for indicating literacy. "Cannot read" and "Cannot write" were interpreted to mean "Can read" and "Can write". The correct interpretation appears on the tape.

1691 Acreage was reported for the 1880 planting as 18 acres of corn and 72 acres of cotton. No 1879 data was given for these crops and none is shown on the tape.

1692 Acreage was reported for the 1880 planting as 10 acres of corn and 31 acres of cotton. No 1879 data was given for these crops and none is shown on the tape.

1700 Acreage was reported for the 1880 planting as 10 acres of corn and 31 acres of cotton. No 1879 data was given for these crops and none is shown on the tape.

1710 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not and "official" farm. The original choice was on page 7, line 10 of the Agricultural Schedule.

1729 Operator was a merchant.

BIBB, ALABAMA [farms 1741-1855]

1743 Operator was a teacher.

1749 Operator was a physician.

1751 Operator was a miller.

1752 Operator was a minister.

1763 Additional crops: 88-1-X; 91-5-X.

1766 Operator was a minister.

1773 Additional crops: 80-X-4; 86-X-15.

1775 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 1, line 10 of the Agricultural Schedule.

1782 Operator was a ferryman.

1783 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 2, line 14 of the Agricultural Schedule.

Enumeration District 3 [farms 1801 to 1830]: In this district the enumerator reversed the standard procedure for indicating literacy. "Cannot read" and "Cannot write" were interpreted to mean "Can read" and "Can write". The correct interpretation appears on the tape.

1804 Additional crop: 91-3-X.

1814 Operator lived on a farm not sampled (located on page 24, line 6 of the Population Schedule).

1818 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 17, line 3 of the Agricultural Schedule.

1828 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

1830 Additional crop: 86-X-40.

Enumeration District 4 [farms 1831 to 1855]: In this district the enumerator reversed the standard procedure for indicating literacy. "Cannot read" and "Cannot write" were interpreted to mean "Can read" and "Can write". The correct interpretation appears on the tape.

BIBB, ALABAMA (continued)

1831 Additional crops: 88-X-X; 91-X-X.

1833 Operator was a miller. Additional crop: 91-2-X.

1840 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

1849 Additional crops: 88-1-X; 91-1-X.

1853 Operator was a lumberman and a farmer.

1854 Operator was a lumberman.

1855 Operator was a telegraphist.

LIMESTONE, ALABAMA [farms 1856-2185]

1856 Operator was a physician.

1858 Additional crops: 81-X-1; 88-1-X; 91-2-X.

1866 Additional crop: 91-2-X.

1886 Additional crops: 86-X-400; 88-1-25; 91-2-X.

1893 Additional crops: 86-X-40; 88-1-X; 91-1-X.

1909 Additional crop: 91-3-X.

1918 Operator of farm 1919 lived on this farm.

1919 Operator lived on farm 1918. Additional crops:
88-1-X; 91-8-X.

1921 Operator of farm 1922 lived on this farm. Additional
crops: 86-X-90; 88-2-X; 91-3-10.

1922 Operator lived on farm 1921.

1926 Operator was a miller.

1929 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

1935 Additional crop: 88-1-3.

1936 Additional crops: 62-6-20; 88-1-X.

1937 Additional crops: 88-2-X; 91-X-X.

1940 Operator was a carpenter.

1947 Additional crop: 88-1-X.

1950 Additional crops: 80-X-5; 86-X-25; 88-1-X.

1951 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

1953 Operator was a miller.

LIMESTONE, ALABAMA (continued)

1955 Additional crops: 81-X-1; 88-1-X.

1961 Additional crop: 88-2-5.

1971 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

1974 Operator was a brickmason.

1975 Operator was a brickmason.

1990 Operator was a mechanic.

2020 Additional crops: 86-X-25; 88-1-X; 91-1-X.

2040 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2056 Operator was a clerk in a grocery store.

2057 Operator was a merchant.

2058 Operator was a leather merchant.

2059 Operator was a lawyer.

2060 Operator was an auctioneer.

2074 Operator was a medical doctor. Additional crop: 91-2-X.

2075 Operator was a medical doctor.

2083 Additional crop: 91-1-3.

2085 Additional crop: 88-X-5.

2146 Operator of farm 2147 lived on this farm.

2147 Operator lived on farm 2146.

2166 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original farm was on page 24, line 1 of the Agricultural Schedule.

FAYETTE, ALABAMA [farms 2186-2355]

The pages of the Agricultural Schedule are not shown consecutively on the film.

2193 Operator of farm 2194 lived on this farm.

2194 Operator lived on farm 2193.

2212 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2217 Additional crop: 88-1-5.

2218 Operator was a merchant.

2221 Operator was a grist mill worker. Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2229 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2254 Operator of farm 2255 lived on this farm.

2255 Operator lived on farm 2254.

2261 Additional crops: 80-X-20; 91-2-X.

2274 Operator was a retired lawyer.

2279 Operator of farm 2280 lived on this farm.

2280 Operator lived on farm 2279.

2287 Additional crop: 88-1-X.

2289 Operator "rented out land".

2290 Operator "rented out land".

2306 Operator of farm 2307 lived on this farm.

2307 Operator lived on farm 2306.

2328 Operator was a brickmason.

2329 Operator was a miller.

2336 Additional crop: 88-2-20.

FAYETTE, ALABAMA (continued)

2340 Additional crops: 88-2-30; 91-2-X.

2341 Additional crops: 80-X-10; 88-2-X.

2343 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2347 Additional crops: 88-1-X; 91-1-X.

2348 Operator was a physician. Additional crop: 91-2-X.

2350 Additional crops: 88-1-X; 91-1-X.

2351 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

RUSSELL, ALABAMA [farms 2356-2650]

2369 Operator was a carpenter.

2383 Operators of farms 2384 and 2385 lived on this farm.

2384 Operator lived on farm 2383.

2385 Operator lived on farm 2383.

2388 Additional crop: 88-1-X.

2406 Additional crops: 88-2-45; 91-3-X.

2418 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 4, line 8 of the Agricultural Schedule.

2422 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 9, line 2 of the Agricultural Schedule.

2425 Additional crop: 91-2-X.

2428 Additional crop: 88-X-50.

2431 Operator was a retail grocer. Operator of farm 2432 lived on this farm.

2432 Operator was a retail grocer. Operator lived on farm 2431.

2433 Operator was a school teacher.

2435 This farm was operated by a partnership. Neither partner was located on the Population Schedule.

2442 Operator of farm 2443 lived on this farm. Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2443 Operator lived on farm 2442.

2458 The original farm selected was replaced since it was not an "official" farm. The original choice was on page 20, line 3 of the Agricultural Schedule.

RUSSELL, ALABAMA (continued)

2462 Operator of farm 2463 lived on this farm.

2463 Operator lived on farm 2462.

2473 Operator was a railroad hand.

2542 Operator was a circuit court clerk.

2543 Operator was a school teacher.

2544 Additional crop: 91-1-X.

2551 Operator also operated farm 2552.

2552 Operator also operated farm 2551.

2567 Operator of farm 2568 lived on this farm.

2568 Operator lived on farm 2567.

2574 Operator was a physician.

2606 Operator was a shoemaker.

UNION, SOUTH CAROLINA [farms 2651-2930]

2651 Operator was a merchant and a farmer.

2653 Operator was a dressmaker.

2654 Operator was a builder and stonemason.

2655 Operator was a physician.

2659 Additional crops: 88-1-5; 91-1-X.

2663 Additional crop: 91-1-10.

2669 Operator of farm 2670 lived on this farm.

2670 Operator lived on farm 2669.

2682 Operator of farm 2683 lived on this farm.

2683 Operator lived on farm 2682.

2687 Additional crops: 80-X-5; 91-5-50.

2691 Operator lived on farm 2692.

2692 Operator of farm 2691 lived on this farm.

2698 Operator of farm 2700 lived on this farm.

2700 Operator lived on farm 2698.

2786 Operator lived on a farm not sampled (located on page 2, line 44 of the Population Schedule).

2787 Operator lived on a farm not sampled (located on page 2, line 44 of the Population Schedule).

Enumeration District 157 [farms 2826 to 2860]: The enumerator in this district occasionally reversed the standard procedure for reporting literacy. The errors were corrected whenever possible. However, literacy data for this district should not be considered totally reliable. The enumerator in this district frequently did not report acreage for farms. Twenty-one farms in the district were replaced for this reason. Therefore, the proportion of share-croppers in the sample may be too low.