

ANNOTATIONS

NEGRO IMMIGRANTS OF TODAY

NEITHER in the many books on Negro problems in this country nor in the numerous studies of the immigration problem can one find more than passing mention of the Negro immigrant. Dr. Reid's recent study, *THE NEGRO IMMIGRANT*,¹ therefore, partially fills a distinct gap in the literature.

The author has set for himself the task of describing the background, characteristics, and social adjustments of foreign-born Negroes in this country during the period 1899-1937. During that period approximately 144,000 Negro aliens were admitted into this country and in 1930, according to the Census, there were approximately 100,000 foreign Negro residents within our borders. In comparison with the white immigrants during the period studied, the Negro immigrants, then, are numerically unimportant. As a part of the total Negro population of our country, too, the foreign-born Negroes can be said to constitute a minority within a minority. The author demonstrates well, however, that the numbers involved give an inadequate index of the importance of this migration, particularly in so far as the effect on native Negro culture is concerned.

The annual immigration reports use the term "Africans Black" as a cover-all designation of Negro immigrants. Actually, the bulk of these immigrants are not from Africa and neither are they pure blacks. They come mainly from the Caribbean area and represent a polyglot collection of racial mixtures. About three-fourths of the foreign-born Negro inhabitants of this country in 1930 were from the West Indies.

With respect to rural background, recency of migration, and large-city destination, the movement from the Caribbean area to this country co-

¹ Reid, Ira De A.: *THE NEGRO IMMIGRANT*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1939, 261 pp. \$3.50.

incides roughly with our internal Negro migration. Less than one-tenth of the present Negro immigrant survivors arrived as early as 1900, as compared with one-third of the foreign white population. The Negro immigrants reside mainly in large cities of the Atlantic Coast. In 1930, 65 per cent of all foreign-born Negro residents in the United States were in New York City.

The author secured materials for his analysis of social adjustments from a variety of sources. With the aid of the Julius Rosenwald Fund he collected life stories, some of which are published in whole or in part in the present volume. He drew upon the files of the National Urban League for many unpublished documents. Those who know the author, however, will agree that perhaps his greatest asset for writing on this subtle subject is compounded of his own Negro ancestry, the bent of his interest, and his first-hand contacts acquired by a long period of residence in Harlem and extended affiliation with the New York Urban League and the National Urban League.

According to Dr. Reid, the Negro immigrant from the West Indies is not only "an alien by law and fact, but he suffers a complete change in status by emerging from a group setting where he was the racial majority into one where he becomes part of a racial minority." A new set of interracial problems is faced and he becomes acutely aware for the first time that his bronze-colored skin sharply delimits his economic and social opportunities.

Neither does the Negro immigrant find any welcome or mental solace in his initial neighborhood contacts in the colored community. As a parallel to the term "dago," the native Negroes apply to West Indians the epithets "monkey chaser," "Spic," and "Garveyite." Stereotyped attitudes are developed to the effect that the West Indian Negroes are too ambitious, too thrifty, and "not to be trusted." On the other hand, the newly-arrived West Indian Negro develops the defenses that the native Negro's own unenviable position is proof of shiftlessness, laziness, and passive acceptance of discriminative practices. Reared, perhaps, in the Episcopal service, the West Indian looks down his nose at the illiterate and emotional character of much of the religious life in Harlem.

The author feels, however, that such personal conflict is but an incidental part of the process of accommodation and adjustment. He believes that the commingling of native and foreign Negroes in urban centers has already brought salutary changes in Negro-white relations. The West

Indians have contributed more than their proportionate share to Negro leadership and to the Negro professional group. To this extent they have helped to shatter the bases for the slave attitudes of whites toward Negroes. If the "ambitious" and "acquisitive" characteristics of the West Indians are often resented by native Negroes, they also provide a stimulus to competition. On the other hand, if the West Indian is initially disdainful of the native Negroes, he soon learns that his own fate is intimately connected with theirs. In time, the outcome should be an invigorated Negro unity. If the Negro immigrant, in seeking improvement in economic, political, and social status, "steps on the heels of the native Negro population, it is only because both groups hear the same drummer and are aligning in a common cause."

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EDUCATING FOR HEALTH¹

IN his preface Mr. Hill states that his aim is not a study of health education as an aspect of health work, but an over-all review of that activity as a part of the whole national movement for adult teaching and learning.

Such a general summary, provided it is well done, can serve both the health educator and the adult educator in other fields. For while we have excellent monographs and papers on popular health education and many good books on school health education, this is one of few books trying to indicate the important interrelationships of the health education field.

How successful has Mr. Hill been in attaining his objective? The author came to his task with no previous experience in the ways of the world of health. The gathering of the material took him into a dozen states and to many more cities and counties. What he lacked in health education background, he made up by a firm knowledge of other forms of adult education, great objectivity of approach, scientific attitude of mind, and a sense of words.

In ten chapters, the author traces the vast health educational move-

¹ Hill, Ernest Frank: *EDUCATING FOR HEALTH. A Study Of Programs For Adults*. New York, American Association for Adult Education, 1939, 224 pp. \$1.25.