

# MORE OF HARLEM CLOSED TO NEGROES

Property Owners in a Third Section Giving Pledges Enforceable at Law.

## ONLY WAY TO SAVE VALUES

Shifting About of Colored Population Found to be a Serious Menace—"All-White Harlem" the Goal Now.

Two organizations to prevent the settling of negroes in certain sections of Harlem have already been completed, and a third was got under way yesterday in the law offices of Clarke & Clarke, at 51 Chambers Street. The scheme is to get pledges from property owners not to rent, lease, or sell any of their property within the restricted sections to negroes. These pledges will be filed in the Register's office and will be a part of the record of the parcels of land indicated.

About sixty persons were present at yesterday's meeting, about one-third of them being women. They represent parcels of property in the section bounded by 129th and 131st Streets and by Lenox and Seventh Avenues. The value of the real estate represented at the meeting was estimated at about \$5,000,000. Richard H. Clarke, who is acting as the counsel for the owners, said that he had seen or heard from about 75 per cent. of all the owners in the section, and that all of them would doubtless join.

The organizations already formed cover the district bounded by 135th and 137th Streets and Seventh and Eighth Avenues and the west side of Seventh Avenue, between 130th and 132d Streets. It was said yesterday that in a short time the property owners in all of the other threatened sections will organize similarly, so that before long Harlem will be practically restricted to a white population.

All of those present at the meeting yesterday were enthusiastic in the work of effecting a complete organization of such a character that the property of all the members would be protected against negroes for the next fifteen years at least. Mr. Clarke said that the only way to prevent the depreciation of the properties by reason of negro invasion was in the way of restrictive covenants and associations among property owners.

One case was cited of an owner who was told by a savings bank that he would have to decrease his mortgage from \$10,500 to \$8,500. He had paid \$17,000 for the property, and he wanted to know why a mortgage that was deemed safe when it was given had grown unsafe within a few years. He was told that the property was in danger of a great depreciation through the invasion of negro tenants.

A committee of five was named to take up the work of effecting a permanent organization. The organization will be incorporated. John Bottomley was made Chairman of this committee, which will hold its first meeting next Wednesday night. Former Judge Henry W. Unger is a member of the committee.

"We believe that the work we are doing is absolutely necessary," said Mr. Clarke, "if the property is to be protected. Many of the people in the district we want restricted to white people have invested all they have in pieces of property, and they are naturally disinclined to see their investments destroyed. It is easier to make the work effective by a series of small organizations, and this will be the way the work will be done."

The colored population of the city is about 97,000, according to the recent figures of a statistician. The majority of them are in this borough, but it was said at yesterday's meeting that, as a rule, they are shifting and uncertain people, so far as the matter of a fixed residence is concerned. This makes it an extra hazardous risk for the setting aside of any property for their use.