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MORTGAGE INDEBTEDNESS.

The figures of indebtedness on the farms of the United States in 1890, as furnished by the census, bear out the assertion which has been frequently made that the South is in a better condition than any other section of the country as far as her farmers are concerned, and that means when you get down to the bottom of it, that she is altogether in a better condition. No man or community can be said to be prosperous if in debt beyond the ability to pay.

A mortgage is not always an evidence of adversity or of a condition that necessarily means inability to pay, for frequently, especially in the cities, mortgages which could be paid off are carried as a matter of business because the money can be profitably used in carrying on business or establishing enterprises, but the farm mortgage generally means inability to pay.

Out of the 12,600,153 families in the United States in 1890 4,797,179 live upon farms. Of the farms upon which these lived 72.03 per cent. were without incumbrance, while 27.97 per cent. were mortgaged. These mortgages represent 37.5 per cent. of the value of the farms, including improvements.

While \$1,257 is the average amount of mortgage indebtedness we think it will be found that the average amount in the five per cent. of Southern farms under mortgage is much less than this, much of it doubtless being for small farms sold to colored people, and to settlers from other sections.

WILMINGTON, N. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1895. NO. 16

STATE LEGISLATURE.

SENATIONAL SCENES IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Republican Members Denounce Marion Butler and His Oratorical Criticism of Their Action on the Six Per Cent. Interest Bill—Populists Threaten to Defeat the Election Law if the Interest Bill is Not Passed—Rousing Proceedings in the Senate.

Queen Lilioukalan kept a diary, which was a very foolish thing for her to do. "The Sons of the Missionaries" have found the diary, and hold that as evidence against her.

Now that Li Hung Chang has been restored and sent to Japan as a peace maker the presumption is that he will be permitted to wear the clothes of which he had been deprived, and also the feathers, although neither Li nor any other Chinaman is in much feather since the Japs have gone to plucking.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Rep. Pop. Joint Caucus to Consider the Cumulative Plan—Unable to Come to an Agreement. [Raleigh News-Observer.]

MINOR MENTION.

There has been a good deal of talk as to whether Southern cotton mills can make fine goods, and become competitors of the New England mills in these lines, as they have successfully done in the coarser goods. We have contended that they can, for the making of fine goods is simply a question of knowledge, machinery and skilled labor.

It will not be many years before the manufacture of fine goods will be common in the South, and the indications are that New England men will lead the way.

The vote by which the gold bond bill was defeated in the House of Representatives shows that the two leading parties are pretty well split on that question, a majority of the Democrats and Republicans voting together against it.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. Moore, a bill to regulate the drawing of juries. Mr. Long, a bill to define a lawful fence in Cabarrus county. Mr. White, bill to prevent the sale of liquor in two miles of Pointe Church.

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

The Rep. Pop. Caucus Comes Near Breaking Up in a Row—A Compromise Arrangement Suggested—Joint Committee of Fourteen Appointed to Take the Matter Under Consideration. [Raleigh News-Observer.]

"I am opposed to cumulation and I am opposed to going back to the old plan," said Senator Fortune, of Cleveland, in the public caucus. He earnestly advocated dropping both the Ewart and the Big Five and starting out on the new line. He proposed a compromise, that each county should elect three commissioners by a direct vote of the people, and that then, upon the petition of 200 legal voters, it shall be the duty of the Governor to appoint a Board of Audit of Finance, who shall be of a different political party from the members of the Board of Commissioners.

Senator Fortune presented them as the ideal compromise plan, and believes that it is the best way out of the trouble the Fusionists are in. He told the caucusmen that he would do his utmost advocacy of this plan, and that many Pops and Repts concurred with him.

After Mr. Fortune there was much speaking, but the more they spoke the further away from each other the two parties drifted. A row was almost imminent. The colored contingent had been doing up to Thursday night, but then the colored brother waked up and was wide-awake last night. Thursday night he railed and ranted. So bellegend-ed he got that a prominent Populist was heard to remark that, while he was in as a co-operationist and a cumulationist, he wanted it distinctly understood that he went in as a white man, and would come out as a white man, though he meant a return to the Democratic party.

Last night's meeting was far from a love feast. Hiltroth the speeches had been compared and after a night of conservatism and gentle phrases were thrown out in the snow storm, to freeze, and red hot words kept the temperature inside almost at blood heat, but outside it was snowing, it was raining, it was raining hot boiling showers of cumulation and anti-cumulation. The "nigger" was a factor and he was not forgotten. A regular old fashioned "nigger" war was threatened. Moody, Lusk, French, Hileman, Fortune, Rice, Grant, and the other leaders said the angry crowd gathered about the speaker, and unless something was done "razors" would be flying in the air. So a motion was made to appoint a committee of seven Republicans and seven Populists to take the whole matter under advisement and report to a subsequent caucus. Of course such a committee would be unable to bring anything of the sort about, but the appointment headed off a big break in the co-operation ranks. Neither side wanted a vote, neither side could afford a vote, and therefore a vote was not taken.

A BIG DEFALCATION.

THE BANK OF LEXINGTON, VA., WIPED OUT BY ITS CASHIER. In Capital Stock and Nearly All the Money Due Depositors Gone—Other People Said to Be Mixed Up in the Affair—People Taken to Arrest the Fugitive. By Telegraph to the Morning Star.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—A special to the Post from Lexington, Va., says: The defalcation of Cashier M. Figgatt, which has swamped the Bank of Lexington, the only banking institution here and the principal financial agent of Rockbridge county, with a population of over 80,000 people, a large number of whom are prosperous, well-to-do farmers, continues to be the all-absorbing topic. Business is practically suspended to discuss the situation.