

mortgages "resting upon all real property in the State of Ohio, exclusive of railroads, was found by Commissioner Fassett to be \$330,999,205.78. This includes the mortgages on farm and city property as well, and of course includes the mortgages resting upon the gas, oil, mining and manufacturing interests, which, as will be seen, bear a large portion of the debt burden of the state." It is probably true that this established debt is larger than the true amount of the debt June 1, 1888. Only a very small portion of the existing real estate mortgage debt of Ohio was created prior to 1870. It has been ascertained for the Eleventh Census that only 3 per cent. of the real estate mortgage debt of the people of Hampden county, Mass., (almost entirely upon village and city property) was created previous to 1870; and only 4 per cent. of debt in Sangamon county, Ill., was created prior to 1880; only 5 per cent. of debt in Scott county, Iowa, was created before 1880; and only $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 per cent. of debt in Cattaraugus county, New York, was created before 1870.

The commissioner of the Ohio bureau established a debt upon all real estate which was only third to a half of the previously reported debt upon farms alone. Thirty per cent. of the established debt belongs to the counties in which Cincinnati, Dayton, Cleveland, Toledo, and Columbus are situated, and the presumption is that more than one-half, perhaps three-quarters, of the real estate mortgage debt of the state is upon village and city property.

The results of enquiry as to Michigan farms is given more at length. The Commissioner, Hon. A. H. Heath, could obtain replies from only 780 out of 1,135 townships. The assessed value of 90,803 farms in that State reported upon is given as \$194,854,133 and the mortgage indebtedness due on these was found to be \$37,456,372. The average rate of interest paid upon these instruments was 7.2 per cent. By a table of twenty Michigan counties, the names of which are given, it appears that forty-three farms in every hundred in these counties bear mortgages. The extent of these mortgages is \$44.20 for every \$100 worth of farm property held. Estimating the total area of Michigan farm real estate by the results obtained from the portion covered by the replies above mentioned, we have a total value of farm land in that State of \$335,378,000, on which there are mortgages to an aggregate of \$64,392,000. This proportion of burden, a little over 19 per cent., is vastly less than we might be led to infer from the evidently exaggerated statements as to mortgage indebtedness of farmers in the Western States which have been flying about for a year or two.

—How to prevent people abroad, or at home, from confusing our North-West with the United States North-West appears to be the problem which has led a deputation from Calgary to wait upon the Government at Ottawa. These gentlemen suggest that, to accomplish the object above-described, one of five titles should be given to the group of territories between British Columbia and Manitoba:—The British Canadian Territories, New Western Canada, British Western Canada, Canadian Western Territories, The British American Territories.

"WILD-CAT" FIRE INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Probably no State in the Union has been more afflicted with this class of companies than Kansas. Commissioner Wilder of that State has been after these transgressors for some time, and he has nearly succeeded in driving them out of the State. Some companies of this sort have been operating in Canada. There is scarcely a well-known insurance man in the country who has not had circulars sent to him by American insurance brokers asking that his surplus lines should be sent to them, and promising that they would place the insurance in *reliable* (?) companies. But when asked to send the names of the companies, the answer never materialized. We commend to our readers the following rather poetical extract from Commissioner Wilder's very interesting report:—

"After a storm a calm. The years of contest with outlaw insurance men and companies are drawing near to a peaceful close. Over the corpses of companies, the dead bodies of presidents and secretaries, the fugitive forms of fleeting frauds making fast time out of our beloved State, one is already able to catch the first bright light of rosy-fingered Aurora, daughter of Dawn, as she gladdens the hill-sides along the Missouri, the Marais des Cygnes and the Marmaton, and joyfully promises to bathe every mound and valley of kindly Kansas in the glorious effulgence of midday sunlight. Let the glad girl come in! No wild animals remain here to disturb her footsteps; if her chariot burns on the journey, the last spoke in the wheels will be paid for by solvent, authorized companies; companies that have been through Chicago, twice through Boston, through Lynn, and Seattle, and Spokane, and paid every dollar of loss.

"Charles IX.—and Vitellius before him—made the cold remark: 'The body of a dead enemy always smells well.' When we call to mind the men, women, and children robbed of many thousands by insurance thieves in Kansas, we do not stop to shed tears over the fallen frauds. Nothing so well became them as their departure. Their presence here for many a year has left so many ruined homes that neither laws nor officers will ever permit their return. No pest in human form has so wronged and robbed the State as the insurance fiend. In disaster and in death, the dancing devil has been present. One of them testified in court, in Topeka, last February: 'I can get business for a company that has no assets.' And he had often done so. He was the president of a Topeka wild cat."

FOREIGN TRADE.

So much interest is now being aroused among United States exporters with respect to increased trade with South and Central America that we think it well to look into the nature and extent of that trade now existing, and, if possible, to ascertain whether Canada cannot obtain a larger share than she now enjoys.

The commerce of the United States with the Guianas is pretty extensive, but so far as the commercial marine of the States is concerned it is all done by sailing vessels from some half dozen ports. Whatever steam vessels—and there is no steam communication except with British Guiana—

ply to those countries from New York are foreign. In a recent year, 1888, the total shipping from the States to the three Guianas and return was done by 128 craft of 60,000 tons, and only seven of these were steamers, to Georgetown, Demerara, averaging say 1,000 tons each. The proportions of this total shipping were: Destined to British Guiana, 54,880 tons; to Dutch Guiana (all sail), 3,380 tons; to French Guiana (all sail), 1,725 tons.

The amount in dollars and cents of the trade so carried may now be noticed. The United States imported from and exported to Guiana as per the under quoted table, in the last year but one:

1888	Value Im-ports.	Value Ex-ports.
British Guiana	\$2,822,382	\$1,717,411
Dutch Guiana	430,983	266,245
French Guiana	12,424	146,757
	\$3,265,789	\$2,130,413

There is thus an aggregate trade amounting to about \$5,400,000 in a year, and 85 per cent. of it with a British colony.

To Venezuela the Americans have had a line of steamers for ten or twelve years past, viz., the red "D" line, whose vessels run from New York to the Island of Curacao, thence to Puerto Cabello, and from there to Laguayra, returning over the same route. Then they have smaller steamers—a branch of the same line—running from the Dutch Island of Curacao to Maracaibo. Of course there were sailing vessels to Venezuela long before that, forty or fifty years perhaps, but the steamers did not begin to run until 1880 or thereabout. They now run once a fortnight. The value of the trade done by the United States per year with the Republic of Venezuela is about \$12,000,000, divided into the proportions of \$9,000,000 imported into the States and \$3,000,000 exported.

Mr. Curtis says in his pamphlet, already quoted, that so greatly has the trade of the States with Venezuela increased in twenty years that nearly half the commerce of that country is now done with North American cities.

What Venezuela gets from England mostly is cotton goods, machinery, railway supplies. The United States is pulling up on the Old Country with respect to the first named, for where, in 1880, Uncle Sam sent only 1,200 bales of cotton goods to that Republic, he sent in the year 1888 over 12,000 bales. What the country needs is flour, provisions, petroleum, furniture, lumber, and the goods previously mentioned. Is it not possible for Canada to make a bid for part of the \$28,000,000 trade which is annually done with foreign countries? Our people may have trouble at the custom houses, or what pass for custom houses, but not perhaps more than is caused by the stupidity or the greediness of Spanish or Mexican functionaries anywhere.

All that Canada imports from Venezuela is coffee. From that country we received last year something over four million pounds into the Province of Quebec, the total value being \$75,216. We have looked in vain through the list of exports covering a hundred and fifty pages of the Blue Book to find what Canada exports to Venezuela. So far as we know, we send her nothing directly.