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NEGRO MAKING GOOD AS FARMERS

Some Interesting Figures On The Negro In The South As Farmers

The great progress that the Negro made in farming in the South from 1900 to 1910 is outlined by Dr. Booker T Washington in an interesting article in the North American Review for February.

He gives figures and facts to show that in fifteen Southern States, as a whole, the colored farmer has increased absolutely and relatively than the white quoting figures from the United States Census to prove his assertions. The increase among white farmers for the decade was 17 percent, while Negro farmers increased 19.9 per cent.

The total number of farms in the fifteen Southern States operated by colored farmers in 1920, says Dr. Washington, was 887,691, an increase of 47,856 for the ten years previous. In Maryland there were 5,843 farms owned or operated by the race in 1900, while in 1920 there were 6,367 such farms, an increase of 542. Dr. Washington writes, in part:

"The point, however, which I wish to emphasize is that, great as has been the increase in total number of farms of both races in the South, the number of Negro farmers has increased proportionately more rapidly than the number of white farmers. While the white farmers in fifteen Southern States increased from 1,870,600 in 1900 to 2,181,805 in 1910, the Negro farmers increased from 739,835 in 1900 to 887,691, making an increase of 10 per cent. for the whites and 19.9 per cent for the blacks.

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"One of the interesting things brought out by the comparison of the different States in this table is the fact that, in the five States of Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Louisiana, and Florida, the number of white farmers has increased at a more rapid rate than the number of Negro farmers. Five other States, West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, South Carolina, and Alabama show the same rate of increase or both races. In the five states, Tennessee, North Carolina, Mississippi, Georgia, and Arkansas, in which nearly half of the total Negro population of the South live, Negro farmers have increased during the past ten years more rapidly than white farmers, in proportion to the population of the respective races of these States."

"In Georgia and Mississippi the number of Negro Farmers has increased but absolutely and relatively more rapidly than the same class of whites. In Georgia the number of Negro farmers has grown from 82,826 in 1900 to 122,341 in 1910, a gain of 3,515 in ten years. In the same period the number of white farmers in Georgia increased from 141,865 in 1900 to 168,158 in 1910, again of 26,283 in ten years.

"In Mississippi, where Negroes now represent fifty six per cent. of the total population and sixty per cent. of the farmers, the number of Negro farmers increased from 128,679 in 1900 to 164,430 in 1910 an increase of 35,752. During the same period the number of white farmers increased from 84,224 in 1900 to 108,380 in 1910, an increase of 7,266.

"Whatever else this increase of Negro farmers may mean, it certainly indicates that, in proportion to their numbers, and in spite of a certain amount of Negro emigration to the North and a considerable immigration of the white population to the South, Negroes are entering in proportionately larger numbers into farming in the South, and becoming more and more responsible, either as owners or as tenants, for the success or failure of agriculture."