

COMMUNICATION.

PROGRESS OF POPULATION—No. III.

Messrs. Editors: No thought can be more delightful to the mind of every genuine American than that of the long, quick strides which our country has made, is making, and, by God's blessing, will still make in her march to unprecedented power. And what most animates the breast of every right-minded spectator of this inspiring scene, is less the hope that the wings of her eagle will overshadow all nations either by the terror of her arms or by the more insidious policy of "annexation," than that all mankind will be illumined by the light of her example, and follow in her peaceful footsteps till they are as happy and as free as she. There is a desire in all men, and more than ever during this period of unequalled progress, to rend the veil of futurity, and peruse the glories reserved by fate for the vision of eyes as yet unborn. But although we are not permitted to enter among the secrets yet hidden in the womb of time, and those secrets may come forth amidst the throes of anarchy and the shadows of returning barbarism, yet it is neither unpleasing nor unuseful to suppose a happy progress from the present, and by the aid of rational conjecture to infer the ripened future from the ripening past. Then, laying aside all gloomy thoughts of possible disunion or possible decay, what may we suppose from the history of the past and the condition of the present, will be the probable future of this land in power and population? The first thought that checks the fervor of hope and the wildness of conjecture, is that there is a limit to all things earthly. Our globe itself can at last sustain but a limited number of inhabitants. What the limit is, of course we cannot ascertain. It contains less than 60,000,000 square miles, and whoever admits 30,000,000 of these as fit, at present, from climate and soil for the crowded residence of men, makes a very liberal allowance. Science may hereafter reclaim for man large regions long given up to hopeless desolation. Its present population is most correctly estimated at about 900,000,000, or 30 per square mile. Were the blessings of virtue, knowledge and freedom universally diffused, there can be no doubt that the present state of science is such as to enable the earth to sustain with ease 300 per square mile. England has already passed that limit, and as yet has met no visible check. In some instances her skill has already drawn nearly 100 bushels of wheat from one acre of land. Past improvements may permit us to believe that this is not the utmost attainable limit: but were even this amount of productiveness attained in all crops throughout the habitable world, and any tolerable division of society into the various classes of producers, manufacturers, carriers and venders, were as universally prevalent, the 30,000,000 sq. m. above mentioned could certainly sustain 500 human beings per sq. mile or 15,000,000,000. The possibility of the easy support of so vast a population is not overthrown by the fact that even in the present condition of England multitudes lie withering in abject want: for this results less from her density of settlement than from a wide prevalence of ignorance and vice, and from a system of unholy legislation—a legislation which forces the hard earnings of those who are already miserably poor into the pockets of those who are already immeasurably rich. Could the proceeds of her yearly industry be fairly divided among the masses, every individual in her cities and her fields might be maintained in overflowing comfort. And whatever may be said by the grumblers and alarmists of the age, the undiminished increase of her numbers and the increased longevity of her people is full proof that the English masses are experiencing a constant melioration, both physical and moral. When, then, we consider that that one country, which is one-fourth smaller than Virginia and far less fortunate both in soil and climate, has increased in 50 years from less than 8,000,000 to more than 16,000,000, adding 1 1/2 per cent. per annum to its already crowded population, till it has reached the enormous density of 320 per sq. mile, and that without any visible augmentation of distress—that this rapid increase still continues unabated, and that with the advancing millions, who cry for food, the steps of agricultural improvement have still kept pace, imparting fresh fertility to the earth and drawing fresh sustenance from her bosom—that the flight of science, which for years has outstripped the fastest vision, is still rushing onward with accelerated speed—that the discoveries of her feeble infancy have so largely overlapped all previous belief, that it would be far less astonishing if her strengthened age should by new applications of chemistry extract nutriment for man from vegetable and animal substances now totally discarded, and even transplant to colder regions the tropical banana, of which a field of one acre will supply more nourishing substance than one hundred acres of the finest wheat ever raised, so that the little island of Porto Rico, if entirely cul-

tivated in this wonderful plant, could supply all the present population of this globe with an abundance of wholesome and palatable food—if, I say, we consider all these things, we shall not, indeed, endeavor to predict the future, but we shall conclude that it is not at all impossible for this earth to contain and sustain some centuries from this 1,000 or still more inhabitants on every sq. mile. But to return from conjectures to be realized only by discoveries as yet unknown, to anticipations based on the actual attainments of science and acknowledged facts in the present condition and past progress of some portions of the world. Those facts and this condition do indeed show that a population of 400 or 500 per sq. mile is attainable throughout the habitable world; but so deeply are most nations oppressed by tyranny, ignorance and vice, that many ages must elapse before this limit will be reached. In some countries, however, present circumstances justify us in anticipating this wonderful result. In these United States, particularly, if we regard the physical character of its territory as well as the form of its government and the spirit of its people, we may fairly expect that population will continue to advance more rapidly than elsewhere. Of the 2,500,000 sq. miles of their area, we may suppose nearly 2,000,000 suitable for a dense population. Our present numbers are about 20,000,000, or an average of 10 for every sq. mile of our habitable soil. The returns of six successive censuses have shown that the population of the whole country has increased for 50 years with almost perfect uniformity in the ratio of about 3 per cent. per annum, or from 33 to 34 per cent. for every 10 years, and consequently doubling in every quarter-century, or a little less. Mr. William Darby, Judge Tucker, and other eminent statisticians (if I may coin a term) have anticipated the continuance of this law of increase for a century or more. But this prophetic theory must, I apprehend, be taken with a few grains of allowance. They seem to have overlooked or undervalued some qualifying circumstances. The natural increase has hitherto been aided by accidental augmentations. The first reduplication between 1790 and 1814 or 1815 was accelerated not only by considerable immigration from Europe, but by the purchase of Louisiana with 50,000 inhabitants, and by the importation of many thousand slaves from Africa. During the last period of reduplication, 1814-'15 to 1838-'40, the ratio was greatly increased by immigration. In that period more than one and a half millions of foreigners are estimated to have come among us, and these with their own natural increase added nearly 2,000,000 to our numbers in the last census. Subtract these 2,000,000, and it is visible that the reduplication would have occupied some 3 to 5 years more. Now this immense tide of immigration cannot flow always. Whenever our population shall have spread over most of our vacant lands, the price of land will of course rise, the facilities of self-maintenance diminish, and the poor of Europe find less inducement to immigration. Deducting these extraneous numbers, the natural increase of our population will be found to proceed in a ratio varying very little from 2 1/3 per cent. per annum, which would effect a reduplication once in about 30 years. The foreign immigration last year was more than 100,000. For 50 years more, perhaps for 75, and possibly for 100, we may expect this immigration to increase in a ratio parallel with our increasing population; because the Old World will become constantly more crowded, and this New World, with a settlement still comparatively sparse, will present attractions but little diminished. Accordingly the number of our people in 1865 may be expected to be about 35,000,000; in 1890 about 70,000,000, and perhaps in 1915 about 140,000,000. Then our average population would be 70 per sq. mile; all the best portions of our territory would be under careful cultivation; the price of lands would be largely increased, and only intelligent industry would command an easy subsistence. These causes, combined with the expense and danger of an Atlantic voyage, would probably commence, by that time at least, to detain the mass of the European poor at home; or it may be that their current would be turned to other and more open quarters of the world. After the year 1915, therefore, I should expect our population to fall back at least to its present ratio of increase, which, apart from immigration, is about 2 1/3 per cent. yearly. In fact, if we consider how dense will be the population in some of the older States, and how much previous emigration and a crowded settlement will have impeded its passage to the new, we shall conclude that if the annual increase shall not have receded to 2 per cent. or less, it will only be because intelligence, industry and virtue shall be more largely and equally diffused than has ever yet been known. If, therefore, we suppose the next reduplication to occupy 35 years, and the United States in 1950 to contain 250,000,000 inhabitants, or 140 per sq. mile, we shall make a liberal admission. As England in the last half-century has increased her population from 160 to 320 per sq. mile, we are borne out by reason and admitted facts in supposing that in the last half of the next century our country, which is at least as favorably circumstanced, will do the same and increase her population from 140 to 280 per

sq. mile. This would give us in A. D. 2000 a census of 560,000,000 human souls! Beyond this we venture not to speculate. For, although we devoutly hope that every year throughout that far-off future may be a milestone notched with the record of human progress, and every age an arch inscribed all over with the triumphs of our race, while religion and knowledge shall shed light as from a sky upon their lofty march, yet for us that millennial vision is a prophecy yet unfulfilled, and to our eyes "shadows, cloud and darkness rest" on all its glories. But, although for the whole country we may fairly anticipate, through a century or more, a rate of progress nearly corresponding with the past, yet we must expect the ratios to be very unequal and unsteady in the several States, as they have hitherto been. The same great cause, namely the expectation of an easier subsistence, which has so long drawn among us a large portion of the increase of Europe, has in greater or smaller measures borne away their natural increase from the older to the newer members of this confederacy. At the formation of our Union some of the "old thirteen," for instance Maine, then belonging to Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania and Georgia, were mostly unsettled, and of course for many years increased rapidly in population, and some of them far beyond their natural progress, owing to large immigration. But as they became more closely peopled, their increase began to leave them, flowing off in a westward and ever-strengthening tide. Those States, however, which had the most of intelligence and public spirit, were least drained of their population, because they presented inducements for their inhabitants to stay at home. The only States of the original 13, which still advance with tolerable rapidity, are Maine and Georgia, from their comparative sparseness; Pennsylvania from its great mineral wealth; New York from its unrivalled advantages of location; and Massachusetts from an enlightened enterprise, which surely has no parallel on earth. Yet even in these States the ratio of increase falls far short of the average ratio of the Union. Meanwhile in all portions of the West the forests have been felled, and human habitations established on their ruins with astonishing rapidity. Presidents and presidential aspirants find it more and more necessary to propitiate the voters of the Mississippi Valley, and the census of 1870, at latest, will show the Atlantic sisterhood of States, the Revolutionary Thirteen, that the balance of political power has passed away forever beyond the Allegheny mountains. Many of the new States are becoming old. Tennessee and Kentucky are as thickly settled as Virginia, and the population of Ohio is more dense than that of Pennsylvania. Before the end of the next generation all the territory between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi will be filled with a population of 50 to the sq. mile, and all the most promising regions beyond the Mississippi will have been thoroughly explored and pretty closely settled. Then the tide of emigration, which has so long drained the Atlantic slope of men, money and strength, will be checked, becoming stationary, and sometimes forced backward by a reflux stream. Then the people of Maryland, Virginia and other Atlantic States, necessitated by circumstances, will divide their large plantations into small farms, and calling in the aid of minute economy and enlightened mind to vary their products and fertilize their land, will discover that one square mile may be made to support 130 more easily than it now supports 30. To accomplish this desirable result there will be needed that same (or a still better) system of thorough, diffusive, free-school education now found in Massachusetts, and which the author of the Report on Free-Schools, just published in your paper, has so warmly and justly eulogized. Whether also those, who alone are interested, and who alone, both by the Constitution of our Government and by the laws of common sense, have control of the matter, will not at last think it expedient to adopt the same system of voluntary labor in place of involuntary, unintelligent and generally unprofitable service, and thinking it expedient, will not endeavor, if it be possible, to accomplish the exchange, I leave for the wise to determine. This is a delicate point: for since the ignorant, meddling spirit and treasonable efforts of Abolitionist incendiaries at the North have awakened so just a feeling of exasperation at the South, it is almost dangerous for a man, who on the one hand reveres the maxim of St. Paul that "every man should mind his own business," and respects rights vested and guaranteed forever by our glorious Constitution, and yet, on the other hand, has a fixed opinion of his own, even to hint at a subject which once was freely discussed by the Jeffersons and Madisons and Monroes of the South. Yet in regard to the expediency of the supposed change, I will merely ask any man of reflection to consider the vast difference in every species of progress between Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky on the one side, and Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois on the other, and then say if all the reasoning on earth can discover but one possible solution of the cause of difference. As regards the feasibility of change, I confess that I can conceive no unobjectionable plan, and if I could should be slow to present it where I know it would be useless. But "where there is a will, there is a way;" and when-

ever their plain interest shall bring landholders to decide on the when, they will soon be able to determine on the how. As for the free blacks, they are undoubtedly a nuisance to themselves, to the poorer whites, to the slaves, and to their masters. If their stay is no benefit to themselves, and of great and evident injury to all others in the community, I am not prepared to say that their forced removal to Africa or elsewhere would be unjustifiable. But they possess a qualified species of rights; those rights ought, as far as possible, to be respected; and it should be remembered that the poor fellows are at last our brethren. Their future increase, and the consequent degradation of labor, are greatly to be deprecated. I think, however, for still other reasons than those heretofore assigned, that the committee have greatly erred in anticipating their future increase to correspond to their past. One fruitful source of their augmentation in past years was manumission. This source has been dried up by legislative action. The fact, too, that whites can leave the State and return again freely, while the free negro cannot, from which the committee anticipate a greater increase of the latter, would, I should suppose, have an effect directly the reverse. For whenever, from the prosperity of the State or from other causes, the whites may find it for their interest to return, there is no obstacle in their way.—The free black, on the contrary, when absent a year, is precluded from return, so that most of those, who remove once, remove forever. The burdensome nature of this provision, together with that passed in the last session compelling them to hire out, and the natural sympathy felt by these lazy, vicious beings for the corruptions of large cities, will undoubtedly depopulate the lower counties of them very largely. I am informed that in this county they are every day becoming less numerous. And it is to be wished they might all be thrown on the hands of the Smiths, the Tappans, the Birneys and the Garrisons, that their yearning bowels might be eased by supporting this worthless crew in the poor's house and the penitentiary. But, at all events, we may anticipate in future rather a lessened increase of this noxious population. Had not these articles already grown too long, an examination of the censuses of this nation might furnish basis for many interesting speculations as regards the future power and population of its various sections. No subject can afford more materials for delightful thought, than the statistics of a great and growing people. Nor is the theme unfruitful of salutary suggestion; for when reason based upon experience directs our eyes to that dizzy height of prosperity which this wide Union may justly be expected to attain, a voice comes forth from that amazing future, commanding every private and every public citizen to live with virtue and to legislate with wisdom.

CIVIS.
PISCATAWAY, March 26, 1846.

PRIOR AND REGISTER.



The above Horses will stand at my stables near Middletown, and be let to Mares until the 15th or 20th of April, at which time they will be removed to the western part of New York. They will be let to Mares on the following conditions: Register will stand at \$30 the season, to be discharged by the payment of \$25, if paid by the July County Court. Prior will stand at \$15 the season, to be discharged by the payment of \$10, if paid at the July County Court. Fifty cents for each Mare to be paid the Groom. Gentlemen wishing to send to either of the above Horses, had better send as early as possible, as they will be removed at the above stated time and perhaps never will return to this State, certainly not for four or five years.

FRANCIS THOMPSON.
mar 12—4t.

The subscriber has declined sending REGISTER to New York for the present season; he will remain at my stable and be let to Mares as above. He will receive common or cold-blooded Mares at \$15 the season, if paid by the July Court, to be discharged by the payment of \$10.

F. THOMPSON.
ap 2.

SIGARS.—Just received a fine lot of Principe and a la Byron Sigars.

WM. FERGUSSON & CO.

PUBLIC SALE.

By virtue of an order of the Orphans' Court of Charles County, the subscribers will sell at public auction, in Port Tobacco, on MONDAY, the 27th day of APRIL, 1846, if fair, if not, the next fair day thereafter, Six valuable NEGROES, slaves for life, and of different ages and sexes. THE TERMS OF SALE require that the purchaser or purchasers give bond, with such security as the subscribers shall approve, for the payment of the purchase money within six months from the day of sale, with interest thereon. A credit of six months will be allowed upon the purchaser complying with the above terms; and the property will be liable, at the discretion of the subscribers, to be resold on the next day, at the risk of any purchaser not complying with the above terms on the day of sale.

JAMES F. NEALE,
FRANCIS R. WILLS,
GEO. W. MATTHEWS,
ap 2.—3w. Exrs of Jno. B. Wills.

THE TIMES.

PORT TOBACCO, MD.

THURSDAY MORNING, APRIL 2, 1846.

We decline publishing our correspondent E. G.'s dissertation upon Oregon, war, &c.

CHARLES COUNTY COURT adjourned its March Term on Tuesday last, after a session of two weeks and two days. The next term of the Court will commence in July next, in accordance with the law passed at the last session of the Legislature, changing the terms of this Court from March and August to February and July.

There was a case before the court on Saturday which created quite a sensation on the part of the court and auditory. It was one between a father and son, and of as aggravated and disgusting nature as could possibly, in the eye of the law and the heart of man, be conceived. The parties were Zachariah Dent and his son Alfred, each swearing his life against the other, and testifying that they had had sundry fights with clubs, knives, &c. and the old father, to swell the catalogue, testified to his having been shot at with a ball, and exhibited his arm to the court to show that his son, in one of their affrays, had broken it. Such scenes, we confess, are rare with us, there never having been a case in any way similar before this court. Good God! to see father and son stand up in open court and each try to convict the other of the grossest brutality towards each other, and that too in a Christian land, is enough to cause the heart to sicken, and almost make one believe he is dwelling among heathen. We did not learn the particulars, coming in but a short time before the case was dismissed; but we saw and heard enough to carry it upon our memory were we to live a thousand years. It appeared the old man was an old offender, as his honor Judge Dorsey, in his address to the prisoner, testified to his having been before the court at almost if not every term since he had been on the bench. Judge D. addressed the prisoner in a very appropriate and pathetic manner, beseeching him to reform the error of his ways, and expressing a hope that the sentence the court was about to pass on him might be the means of his reclamation. He was sentenced to the Penitentiary for two years and three months.

FAIR at NOTTINGHAM.—There will be held at Nottingham, on Monday and Tuesday of the coming Easter week, a Fair for the purpose of erecting a pulpit and making the necessary repairs in the church of the Rev. Mr. Sweet.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE.—A letter from a member of the Baltimore Conference, published in the North American, says that the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has unanimously resolved to remain in connexion with the Methodist Episcopal Church, to resist, as it has uniformly done from the first, the introduction of slavery among its members; to hold no connexion with any ecclesiastical body that shall make non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the Church, and to stand by the discipline as it is. The Conference has also expressed its determination to favor the division of the general funds of the Church, as provided for in the plan of separation. There was at no time any warmth of feeling or division of sentiment respecting these matters.

EXCESS OF DUTIES REFUNDED.—A message has been received by Congress, from the President of the United States, communicating a correspondence between the Secretary of State and the British minister, relative to the excess of duties which have been charged by both countries beyond the terms of the treaty of 1815. The Union says the whole matter has been amicably adjusted, and to the honor of both countries no serious difficulty was made by either government in respectively reimbursing the excess of the duties. The article on which we claimed reimbursement was the rough rice, or paddy, of the Southern States, which our Government contended should not have been charged at a higher rate than the rice imported into Great Britain from the west coast of Africa. The British government now agrees to pay back the excess

On the 21st ult. the barque Juniata, Capt. Blanchard, cleared at Baltimore with 4453 bbls. and 200 half bbls. flour.