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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

COMMUNICATING

A report of the Superintendent of the Census.

DECEMBER 20, 1853.
Ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, Dec. 19th, 1853.

SIR:—I have the honor to communicate to the Senate, herewith, the report of the Superintendent of the Census, dated the 14th inst, to which a brief allusion was made in my annual report of the 5th inst., to the President of the United States.

I am, Sir, with much respect, your obedient servant,

R. McCLELLAND,
Secretary.

Hon. DAVID R. ATCHISON,
President of the Senate.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Census Office, Dec. 14th, 1853.

The public printer has completed, and is now delivering into the hands of the binder, the volume of the census of 1850 which embraces the material ordered to be printed by the last Congress, aggregated for the United States, with such comparative and illustrative tables, notes, &c., as seemed necessary to a complete understanding of the work, and for preserving upon the subject of the census the experiences of the government.

The volume will compare favorably in typographical execution with any document hitherto published by Congress; and I am in hopes, will compare with equal advantage in this respect, as well as in the arrangement and general fidelity of execution, with any of the statistical works of other countries. It contains 1158 quarto pages, 130 of which are devoted to the aggregate tables proper of the United States, notes, schedules, &c., and 5 or 6 pages to the additional and comparative tables of other countries. In the opening page, and in a note to this report, it will be seen what portions of the volume have been prepared under my own superintendence,

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and to which my responsibility extends. The remainder was prepared under the previous administration of the office.—*Vide Note A.*

The eight or ten introductory pages embrace a copious index; a chapter upon the schedules, their deficiencies, &c., a brief letter relating to the business and finances of the office, some notes upon the machinery, &c., of the census, and a statement of the census expenditure at each period since 1790, &c. These are succeeded by about eighteen pages embodying compactly the various schedules adopted for each census from the beginning of the government, including those of 1850; the blanks used in the Census Office for condensing information; the instructions to marshals at different periods; an abstract of the census legislation since 1790; the acts, &c., relating to the Census of 1850, with two or three pages upon the census system adopted in the various states of Europe as compared with our own. About one hundred pages follow, of tables more or less elaborate, closely condensed, with brief explanatory notes upon the following subjects: "Population, decennially, from 1790 to 1850; Territorial extent of the United States; Coast and river lines of the United States; Colonial population at various periods; Progress of population in the United States; square miles, density, &c., of the States, and dates of admission into the Union; Progress of European population; ratio of representatives in the States since 1790; nativities of the population, white and free colored; births, marriages, deaths, dwellings and families; classification of the ages of the white, free colored and slave population; rank of the States since 1790, with reference to each class of population and of area; increase and decrease of population by States, deaf, dumb, blind, insane and idiotic, 1850, 1840 and 1830; comparative population of the cities and towns of the United States from the earliest period, compared with the population of the leading cities of the world; increase of population, male and female, in 60 years; churches in the United States, church property, church accommodations, (the number of members was not taken;) attending schools; adults who cannot read and write, 1840 and 1850; schools, colleges, academies, 1840 and 1850, compared with Great Britain; libraries in the United States; newspapers and periodicals, 1840 and 1850; professions, occupations and trades of the male population over 15 years in 1850; occupations of the free and slave population of the United States, of both sexes and of all ages, in 1840; occupations of the population of Great Britain in 1841; agricultural productions of the United States, 1840 and 1850; ratio of population and of certain crops; proportion of white males to females, 1850; proportion of white, free colored and slaves, and of sexes, at each census period; ratio of increase of population in the United States, in 60 years, by general divisions; ratio of ages and sex combined, white, free colored and slave; ratio of the several classes of population in each state to the total of the United States; immigration into the United States since 1820, ages and sex; nativities and occupations of passengers; meteorology of the United States; Indian statistics of the United States since 1790."

Succeeding the above are two elaborate tables; 1st, Table of counties, districts and parishes in the United States, alphabetically arranged, embracing their population, white, free colored and slave; foreign born, dwellings and families. 2d, Population of places included in the census volume of 1850 including every state, territory, county, district, parish,

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city, town, township, hundred, &c., in the United States, alphabetically arranged.

The states and territories now follow in the geographical order, each being separated by a fly-leaf, and a title, with the following heads:

1. Population by counties, classification of ages and color; aggregates.
2. Population by subdivisions of counties.
3. Nativities of the population.
4. Births, marriages, deaths, dwellings and families.
5. Progress of the population.
6. Deaf, dumb, blind, idiotic and insane.
7. Colleges, academies, schools, &c.
8. Attending school during the year, as returned by families.
9. Adults in the state who cannot read and write.
10. Professions, occupations and trades of the male population.
11. Agriculture, farms and implements, stock, produce, home manufactures, &c.
12. Newspapers and periodicals.
13. Libraries, other than private.
14. Churches, church property, &c.

The state census of California, taken in 1852, is appended by order of Congress, and the volume concludes with a general appendix, embracing notes upon the deficiencies in the schedules of each of the states, and correcting such typographical or clerical errors as had escaped attention in the text.

In the progress of such a work through the press, and in the arrangement of so great a multitude of figures, errors were of course to be expected. They are however for the most part, unimportant, and are not only pointed out in the appendix but corrected in the aggregate tables in the opening of the work. The tables have been carefully examined by different sets of persons, and will be again revised, should an edition of the aggregate matter be ordered, as I am in hopes it will.

Of the sum of $50,936, which was subject to the orders of the census upon my entrance into the office, about $20,000 still remain, and the total expense incurred upon each census since 1790, as made up at the Treasury, is as follows:

The census of	1790	$44,377 28
"	1800	66,109 04
"	1810	178,444 57
"	1820	208,525 99
"	1830	378,545 13
"	1840	833,370 95
"	1850	1,318,027 53

to the 30th of September, 1853, and exclusively of the expense of final printing, &c.

Four or five clerks are still employed whose services will be required for a few weeks in arranging the papers and manuscripts of the office, which are very cumbrous, and which will be carefully indexed and bound so as to be secured in a state for preservation and future reference. There will be seven or eight hundred volumes of the schedules of 1850, three hundred and fifty of 1810, one hundred and fifty of 1830, &c. Those of an earlier date are in great confusion.

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The statistics of *manufactures* were not ordered by Congress to be included in the volume. Upon examination, I am satisfied that they are at least as complete and reliable as those of any previous census, and perhaps more reliable. The government has collected by every census, except one, since 1800, and published, material of this kind. I would, therefore, recommend its publication now. In a small type, and arranged upon the plan suggested in another place, it will occupy about three or four hundred pages of the size already adopted. Calls for this information are being daily made, and it is almost indispensable in arranging the questions of revenue and for other legislation.

The statistics of *diseases and deaths*, though very incomplete, are still thought by medical statisticians, and medical associations, to whom I have submitted them in part, to be worthy of publication. I have presented some considerations upon the subject in the body of the volume, and will append the various memorials that have been forwarded in regard to it. I recommend the publication of these statistics in a small edition of two or three thousand copies for the use of medical professors, societies, &c. They will occupy about as much space as the manufacturing statistics.

Should another edition of the complete census be published, it is probable that by the use of a smaller type the whole manufacturing statistics could be added without increasing the size of the volume. Extra copies of these statistics should also be printed as a supplement to the volume already published.

It is evident that the present edition (20,000 copies) of the census is too small. The work ought to be distributed, and has hitherto been distributed in a manner different from that adopted for the miscellaneous documents of government. Something like the following distribution is recommended:

Colleges and Academies, &c., in the U. States (one copy to each,)	6,500
State and City governments (15 to each)	500
Counties, to be deposited at court houses, (one each,)	1,600
Foreign Governments, &c.	500
Societies, Libraries, &c., in the United States,	1,500
Departments, &c.	1,000
	11,600
Edition	20,000
	8,400

or about twenty-seven copies for each member of both houses of Congress. If the members of the last congress are to be supplied the number will be much less.

Of the introductory portion of the volume, embracing the aggregate tables of the United States, &c., I recommend that a large edition be separately printed, with such additional notes and comparative tables as have been prepared fully or in part already, and are indispensable to a clear understanding of the census, but are not now included. They will make an octavo volume about the size of the Patent reports, and the publication will be in accordance with previous usage.

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Should the statistics of manufactures and mortality be ordered for the press, I am of the opinion that the amount now in the Treasury to the credit of the Census Office will be very nearly, if not quite, sufficient for their preparation, as well as for the preparation of the final report, to which reference has been made.

Your obedient servant,
J. D. B. DEBOW,
Supt. Census.

To the Honorable R. McCLELLAND,
Secretary of the Interior.

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APPENDIX TO REPORT.

RICHMOND, VA., *May* 8th, 1852.

At a meeting of the "American Medical Association," held in Richmond, Va., on Thursday, May 6th, 1852, T. Y. Simons, M. D., of South Carolina, C. Boyle, M. D., of District of Columbia, and George Sumner, M. D., of Connecticut, were appointed a committee to memorialize the Congress of the United States, to have published in a separate form, for distribution among the medical profession, under the auspices of the association, a large edition of the medical statistics, furnished by the census lately taken."

A. R. WELLFORD, M. D.,
President of the Am. Med. Association.

P. CLAIBORNE GOOCH, M. D., EDW'D. L. BEALE,
Secretaries.

Medical Society of the State of New York.

"*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this society that much useful information will be given to the profession and the public, by the publication of classified tables, embodying the facts contained in the mortality returns of the late census of the United States; and that it would be a subject of deep regret to this body, and they believe to the medical profession throughout the country, if so large a body of important facts as are contained in these returns should be lost to the public. Therefore,

"This Society respectfully prays Congress to cause those returns to be tabulated and published in such manner as to embody and diffuse the largest amount of useful information."

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE,
New York, Feb. 10th, 1852.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Academy, the publication of the statistics of mortality contained in the census report of the United States, is highly desirable, &c. &c.

MEMORIAL.

Your memorialist, in behalf of the American Medical Association, and by its authority, humbly and respectfully presents the following petition to your honorable body:

At the meeting of the American Medical Association, held in Richmond, Virginia, in May, 1852, a resolution was offered and passed, appointing a committee to memorialize Congress, respectfully requesting that a large edition of the medical statistics, furnished by the census lately

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taken, be published in a separate form, for distribution among the members of the medical profession throughout the United States.

The committee, in May, 1852, after the adjournment of the association, drew up a memorial and had it presented to your honorable body, upon which no action was taken.

In May, 1853, when the association met in New York, the undersigned reported these facts, when it was resolved that the committee do again memorialize Congress.

Your memorialist, therefore, as chairman of said committee, respectfully again approaches your honorable body, praying your serious consideration.

The subject of medical or vital statistics has attracted the attention, and been actively and scientifically pursued in the most enlightened nations of Europe, and has excited much attention in many of the States of the Union, in some of which a regular system of registration of births, marriages and deaths is adopted, and in others is under legislative consideration; and the publication of the medical statistics from the United States census would be of considerable importance at the present time, in giving aid to a more thorough investigation of this valuable and interesting part of medical knowledge and hygiene, which must lead ultimately to very beneficent results.

It has been objected that the returns are imperfect. This is readily granted: still the publication is important, as enabling the members of the medical profession to make suggestive alterations as improvement, not only in the manner, but the means employed in obtaining such information, as may be honorable not only to the profession but the country.

The members of the American Medical Association, composed of elected delegates from the most eminent of the medical profession through the different states of the Union, at great expense and sacrifice of personal convenience and valuable time, assemble each year in different States for the sole object of elevating the moral and intellectual character of the profession, as advancing medical and all the collateral sciences, and promoting all hygienic or sanitary measures which may tend to the ameliorating or alleviating the diseases of our country; and with such scientific and benevolent objects for their guide and pursuit, the undersigned feels a sanguine hope that petitions coming from such a body will not only receive your respectful and serious attention, but, if practicable, be adopted.

Your memorialist, therefore, in behalf of the committee and the American Medical Association, humbly pray that you will grant this, their petition.

THOS. Y. SIMONS, M. D.
Chairman of the Committee of
the American Medical Association.

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NOTE A.

The following portions of the volume were prepared from the schedules, etc., under the direction of the present superintendent;

1. The table of population by counties, entire, and the classification of ages, etc., in part, for Pennsylvania, Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Iowa; and a new edition of the tables of all the States in which errors are corrected or referred to in the notes.

2. The tables by subdivisions of counties for nearly all the States.

3. The whole of the tables of nativities for the States, by sex and color. They were prepared before without regard to these distinctions.

4. The tables of births, marriages, and deaths. (These were made up from the material for the most part already finished.)

5. The whole of the tables showing the ratio of population from 1790 to 1850.

6. The whole of the tables of the deaf, dumb, blind, insane and idiotic, for reasons which are explained where these matters are treated of.

7. The whole of the tables of schools, colleges, &c.

8. The occupation tables for New York, New Jersey, Maryland, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, California, Oregon, New Mexico, and the greatest portion of them for Georgia, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Michigan, Iowa and Wisconsin.

9. The whole of the church statistics.

10. The tables of newspapers, libraries, agriculture, &c. (These were arranged anew, and in some cases, on the discovery of errors, corrected.)

11. All the aggregate tables (except the agricultural) relating to the United States, as well as the alphabetical list of counties, towns, &c., and the material of every kind connected with them, in the introductory part of the volume, and the notes which form the appendix.

12. The whole preparation and arangement of the tables for the press, in the forms in which they appear; the adoption of the plan of publication, the correction of the proof, &c.