

KEY WEST.

Interesting Information About the Isolated City.

From Our Own Correspondent.

KEY WEST, Fla., Tuesday, May 6, 1873.

At the most extreme southerly point of "Uncle Sam's" domain, beautifully situated upon a sea-girt isle, is the growing commercial City of Key West, with a population of 8,000 souls, representing almost every civilized nationality—English, French, Spanish, Mexican, Italian, Chinese, &c. About one-third of the inhabitants are Americans, and one-third Spanish or Cubans, and one-fourth Bahama negroes. The principal source of prosperity is from the cigar business, under the control of the Cubans. There are manufactured daily 135,000 cigars, worth \$10,000. The duties accruing to the Government from this branch of industry alone exceeds \$250,000 a year. The sponge trade is an important item of commerce here, and is directly controlled by natives of the Bahamas, whose early training on the reefs renders them invaluable for that branch of industry. They have seventy vessels, of from five to thirty tons burden, engaged in it, giving employment to 350 persons. The sponge business is worth \$150,000 annually. Turtle fishing is a flourishing business here, giving employment to 100 men. They are shipped principally to New-York and Baltimore. Smack fishing for the Cuba market engages 100 men and fifteen vessels. There are two free schools, largely attended, here, besides a convent, and eight churches, four Methodist, one Episcopalian, two Baptist, and one Catholic. Commercial intercourse consists of a weekly line of steamers from New-York, a semi-monthly line from Baltimore, and a weekly line from New-Orleans and Galveston. Rents are high here in consequence of the great influx of immigrants from the Bahamas and Cuba. There are two English papers published here. The *Dispatch*, published by Col. Crane, is a live Republican journal, devoted to local interests, and is liberally supported. The climate is remarkable for mildness throughout the year, the mercury never falling below 50°, and it does not reach higher than 95°. The thermometer ranged from 54° to 82° in January, 59° to 83° in February, 53° to 89° in March, and 61° to 90° in April. The cable connecting Key West with Havana, which was broken a year ago, has been "picked up" and is in operation again.