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CENSUS OF PORTO RICO.

Comprehensive Review of the Island's Present State.

POPULATION NEARLY A MILLION.

Economic and Social Value and Productive Capacity as They Relate to the United States Government were Mapped in Estimates of Millions of Dollars.

As soon as the census of Porto Rico was completed last year the total population of the island was estimated, together with one or two other leading features of the work. The last department is now preparing to distribute copies of the full report in regard to the census made by Lieutenant Colonel J. D. Stanger of the inspector general's department. The report is in the shape of a well-bound volume of over 200 pages and contains between 100 and 200 more reliable information in regard to Porto Rico than has ever before been given in each intelligent form to the American people, says the Washington Star.

The figures of population as given out some time ago were approximately correct, the total being 750,000. This figure shows a decided increase over that of the last census, which was taken in 1857. In fact, from the earliest census taken in 1795, the population has steadily increased from about 15,000 a century and a half ago to nearly a million at the present time. Considering that the island is only about 13 miles wide and 300 miles long, it is densely populated. About 62 per cent of the people are white, the other 38 per cent being colored or mixed blood. The percentage of mixed blood in the colored population of Porto Rico is very much greater than in Cuba, for while 52 per cent of the colored Cubans are full-blooded negroes, 83 per cent of the colored Porto Ricans are colored, many of them nearly white.

A very large percentage of the population of Porto Rico is of the agricultural class, for only about 75,000 people live in the great cities of the island. The percentage of literacy is very high, slightly more than 90 per cent of the people being literate, the total being 700,000. The percentage of illiteracy in the colored population of Porto Rico is very much greater than in Cuba, for while 52 per cent of the colored Cubans are colored, many of them nearly white.

The relative importance of the crops raised in Porto Rico is shown by the area devoted to each crop. Coffee occupies 11 per cent, sugar cane 10 per cent, bananas 10 per cent, and the balance is divided among several other Indian corn, beans, etc., being the principal articles. Coffee is the chief crop in the United States, only 72 per cent of the coffee cultivated by the various 11 different individual states can show as high a percentage of occupancy by coffee as does Porto Rico.

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The strategic importance of Porto Rico was recognized at an early day, for attempts were made by England, Holland and France to wrest it from the control of Spain, though without success. The attacking parties did considerable damage in their assaults upon the city of San Juan, but owing to the excellent natural defenses and aided by yellow fever the natives were able to drive off the invaders.

The Indian population of Porto Rico at the date of its colonization by Spain is said to have numbered a half million souls. These were copper-colored and very similar in character to the Indians of southern Mexico. They had little industry or enterprise and the Spaniards gradually exterminated them, reducing many to slavery. In 1543 it was reported to the king of Spain by the bishop of San Juan that there were but 90 native Indians on the island. The recent census taken by the United States did not discover a single Indian of the aboriginal type, though close observers report many people in the interior of uncolonizable Indian descent.

The negro blood in Porto Rico comes, as in other West India islands, through the importation of slaves, which commenced nearly 400 years ago and continued until 1872, when slavery was abolished. This black labor was of great consequence to the island in the cultivation of sugar cane, and when the slaves were freed the condition was made that they should work a certain number of years at a stated salary to prevent any disaster to large employers of labor. There are a few Chinese in Porto Rico, none ever having been brought in under the code system as in other West India islands. In Porto Rico their presence is entirely voluntary.

Cuba and Porto Rico have a smaller percentage of colored people in the population than any other West Indian island, Cuba having 33 per cent and Porto Rico 30. In the other West Indies the percentage of negroes runs from 61 in the Bermudas to 88 in Jamaica. Each of the American coast states, except North Carolina, has a smaller proportion of whites than Porto Rico or Cuba. There are 20,071 males of voting age in Porto Rico, and over 90 per cent of these are native born. About 3 per cent of the population is Spanish, these people being concentrated in the commercial centers, where they are engaged in business.

The conjugal condition in this island is very similar to that in Cuba, for less than 17 per cent of the adults are married. Seventy per cent of the adults are single. About 8 per cent live together by mutual consent, and more than 4 per cent are widows and widowers. The proportion of the colored population engaged in breeding is only about one-third, while in Cuba the proportion is about two-fifths. Of people 65 years of age and over more than one-half are still working for a living in these two West India islands. It is also to be noted that a large num-

ber of children below the age of 5 die among breeders.

The average death rate in Porto Rico during the past 11 years has been about 20 per cent and the average birth rate about 35. There is no growth in the population by immigration and such a small gain from birth that the population is not, neither increasing nor decreasing, but remaining stationary in a greater development of civilization.

Most of the men of Porto Rico are skilled artisans, and 20 per cent of the entire island is under cultivation. The former group is not large, but is entirely confined to the higher elevations. Few remains of the primitive forest are to be found, either living or dead.

Department officials are watching with considerable interest the progress of new experiment in the office of Ecclesiastical Record, which is correspondent of the New York Times. The latter has been busy for some time trying to discover a way of preventing the consumption of salt by cattle from people outside the war department, congressmen included. His new experiment is an attempt to solution of this problem.

An hour before the time for closing the war department office was left the secretary's office are shut and locked. This does not mean that the office is closed, on the contrary, work goes on as usual as ever. Inside the main room of the office are three or four sturdy colored watchmen who remain behind the locked doors to let out people who were in before the place was closed up and to see that nothing slips in. People come and try the doors and go away disappointed. All through the rest of the big department there is

ROOT WELL GUARDED.

Novel Experiment Being Tried In War Secretary's Office.

ELABORATE SYSTEM ESTABLISHED

How Cattle Called Are Identified From Culling Admittance Into the War Department—How the Secret Code Invented on the Basis of the Morse System.

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SUBMITTAL.

every sign of life. Doors are swinging open and closed and electric wires are clicking and crackling are bursting about. Only the doors leading to Mr. Root's office are locked and padlocked, and there a stranger will see no sign of life.

So strictly is this carried out that even the door leading from Chief Clerk Schiebold's room is locked, although this door does not open on the hall, and no ordinary man would think of pushing entrance through it. But it was conjectured that some one very intent on seeing the secretary might get into Mr. Schiebold's room on some pretext and thus watching the chamber, break through the door into the main room. Even then the stranger would have to pass over the dimly lighted floor of the three-storyed office before he could penetrate to the next room, which contains Private Secretary W. S. Conroy and Confidential Clerk F. C. Squires. He would then have to overcome Conroy and Squires before he could get into Mr. Root's room. It was decided, however, to take no chances, and Mr. Schiebold's door was locked.

But it was necessary to devise a way by which Mr. Schiebold could get in to see his chief. It would also be a disagreeable predicament if one of the colored messengers passing out on an errand should be unable to get in on his return. There were also others in the department who must find a way to get in and see the secretary. They could not do it by trying the door or knocking, because the garrison was instructed to pay no attention to such primitive methods of getting in.

This problem was grappled with and a solution found. A secret code was invented, comprehensive and accurate. When Mr. Schiebold or any of the other persons in the secret wants to get in, he delivers a peculiar series of knocks on the door. In like it is believed, on the basis of the Morse system. This cipher knock means, "I want to get in." It is instantly recognized by the garrison, and one of them utters to the door. He does not open it, however. He goes to the divisor of the system that some hurried congressman or visiting New Yorker or other nondescript person might by sign of heading around the door and listening for some time acquire the secret of the code and after consulting it to memory deliver an intimation which would deceive the officials of the department.

Mr. Ross, accompanied by an expert detailed from the department, has gone to Carroll county, Md., where he will spend a short time in a thorough examination of the practical working of the rural free delivery system.

Mr. Ross declares that the time of the United States rural postal service has passed to Canada and excited the greatest interest there. The Liberal party, which is an advocate of progressive movements, stands ready to inaugurate the service there if the postmaster general of the Dominion thinks well of the Philadelphia Press.

CREATES NEW CODE.

According to a report from Athens the new Crete coins will soon be put into circulation. They bear the head of Prince George and include gold pieces of 20 and 10 francs, silver pieces of 5, 2, 1 and half francs, small change in nickel of 20, 10 and 5 centimes and in copper of 2 and 1 centimes, says the New York Tribune. Although on the basal Greek, Italian and French silver money has already been in circulation Turkish money having disappeared.

Italians demand "The Juncture Book."

Rudyard Kipling is dramatizing "The Jungle Book" for H. Clay Cameron, who intends to produce the play next summer in London.—New York World.

CHICAGO'S SALT EPIDEMIC.

Physicians Afraid That Widespread Scourvy Will Result.

Physicians throughout Chicago are complaining that an "epidemic of salt" has broken loose, says the New York Tribune. They say these days when they are called to attend a patient about the first thing they hear is, "Doctor, don't you think an injection of salt would cure me?" This is attributed to recent ignition of the merits of salt solution in given publicity through favorable discoveries recently made by Professor Jacques Lach of the University of Chicago and Dr. W. Byron Cumley, a North Side physician. Dr. Elmer E. Prentiss of the West Side recently expressed the opinion that so prevalent had become the idea that salt could cure any ailment that if the public was not yet in mind the whole world would be suffering from scurvy in spite of six months, Dr. Prentiss said.

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