

Document L.]

PAM
369

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES,

APRIL 19th, 1852.

already
cat
5/30/74

Read and ordered to be printed.

REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE
ON
COLORED POPULATION
TO THE
HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

REPORT.

The Committee on the Colored Population of Maryland, submit the following Report, and the accompanying Bill.

The Colored Population of Maryland, is divided into the slave and free.

The relations of the former have been so long established and are so thoroughly understood, that legislation is rarely necessary in regard to it: nor is there, now, anything concerning it that requires the especial notice of the committee.

On the other hand, the free colored population, including, as well persons born free, as emancipated slaves, has been made, again and again, the subject of legislative action; and, at this time, circumstances give to all matters connected with it, a more than ordinary interest.

There are more free colored persons in Maryland, than in any other State of the Union; the number, according to the census of 1850, being 74,723. In the city of Baltimore, there are 25,475. Anne Arundel contains 4,602, which is the largest number in any one county; the smallest number being in Allegany county, where there are 412.

At the first census, of 1790, the entire free colored population of Maryland, was but 8043, and the white population 208,649. The present white population being 417,943, it will be observed, that, while the free colored population has increased *ninefold*, the white population has only *doubled*, in the last sixty years.

The entire colored population, slave and free, of the State, in 1790, was 111,079, of which 103,034 were slaves. The entire colored population, in 1850, was 164,445, of which 90,368 were slaves. The free colored had increased, in the sixty years, 66,680, the slaves had diminished 12,668. In 1810, the slaves numbered 111,502; which was the largest number ever held, at one time, in Maryland.

From these figures it will be noted, that the increase of the aggregate of the entire colored population has been owing, entirely, to the increase of the free portion of it, which has been, uninterruptedly going on, at almost an uniform rate, while the slaves have decreased, by 12,668, since the first census.

The increase of the white population, from 1830 to 1840, was in the ratio of 9.3 per cent. only; while the free black population increased in the ratio of 17.26—ratios of increase, respectively, which, if maintained for many successive census periods, would have, ultimately, placed the free colored population, so far as numbers were concerned, in the ascendancy. Less notice was taken of this revelation of the census of 1840, than was to have been expected from its very suggestive character, especially as there were few, if any circumstances, to indicate a change in the ratios of increase. The census of 1850, exhibits a far more satisfactory state of things; for, although the ratio of increase of the free colored population had advanced from 17.26 to 19.44, yet the white population has increased in the ratio of 31.74 per cent. in the same period.

These statements are general. Their interest is not lessened by looking into their details. For instance, in 1790, there were 100 white persons for every 10 free colored, in Kent county; in 1840, the proportion was lessened to 20 whites for 10 free colored, and the late census shews the further reduction to 17 whites, only, for 10 free colored. From 1840 to 1850, the white population remained stationary in Kent—the return of both census being the same—5,616, while the increase of the free colored population in the interval, was 652.

In eleven counties, the ratio of increase of the free colored population has been greater than that of the white, between 1840 and 1850. In Charles county, the white population has actually decreased, and in Kent it has remained stationary, while the free colored population has increased 94 in the former, and 652 in the latter county.

The committee might continue, and apply the details of the census to the different counties. But it is unnecessary in this place. They have said thus much to draw attention to tables, annexed to their report, and which exhibit all the information that can be required on this interesting branch of the State's statistics.

This interest grows out of the fact, that the population, to which these statistics relate, and which they shew to be steadily increasing in our midst—is one, with which there never can be that amalgamation, that social and political equality, which shall unite it with the white and dominant population as one people, with common sympathies, interests and destiny.

That the presence of two races in Maryland, under such circumstances, can be advantageous to either, or promote the prosperity of the State, no one pretends. In the inevitable competition that must exist between them for employment, in all the avenues of labor, the weaker must go to the wall, whenever the population becomes so dense as to reduce the wages of labor to a minimum.

At this time, when the aggregate population of Maryland,

white and colored, is 583,035—there seems to be room for both races, so far as mere subsistence is concerned, although, even now, white men are to be found in many occupations, which, a few years since, were held by colored persons, almost exclusively. The ratio of increase, from 1840 to 1850, maintained until 1890, would give to Maryland, at that time, a population of 1,380,196. But, supposing it was *doubled* only, in the next 40 years, it cannot be doubted that the difficulties which, now, often-times beset the free colored people in their search for employment, would be grievously increased.

That these difficulties arise from the increase in our aggregate population, is proved by the fact, that it is only within the last ten years that they have been at all recognized and made the subject of remark—a fact explained by reference to the statistics already so largely drawn upon.

Between 1830 and 1840, the aggregate increase of the white and colored population, was 22,979, or 5.1 per cent only; while from 1840 to 1850, it was 113,016, or 24.04 per cent., the increase of the free colored population in the two periods, being 9,140 and 11,989, respectively. The immigration into Baltimore alone, for the first of these terms, had been 55,322, and for the last 68,392.

Now while the increase of 5.1 per cent. in ten years, from 1830 to 1840, was not sensibly felt in the market for labor, the increase of 24.04 per cent. from 1840 to 1850, was often severely felt, especially when an increased foreign immigration, of a class of persons, who become at once the competitors of the free people of color, formed so large an item in the aggregate increase.

But while all are willing to admit that the presence in the State of the two races thus referred to, is advantageous to neither of them, and is full of gloomy portent, it is difficult to say what is the exactly right and just course to be adopted, so far as legislation is concerned, under the circumstances.

That the two races must ultimately separate, the committee do not doubt. Their separation is the only solution of the political problem to which their present existence together gives rise, and this being conceded, there is but one place to which they can remove as a body—and that is Africa. In no spot on the continent of America, in none of the adjacent Islands, can they establish themselves as an independent people. They must get out of the way of the white man, and go where he cannot live; not in view of the present population of this Hemisphere perhaps, but in view of the time when the white men of the New World shall equal in numbers the white men of the Old World. Africa is the only place which fulfils all the exigencies of the occasion. It is the country of the colored race, and a country where the white race cannot live.

In 1831, the Legislature of Maryland, with a forecast

free bla

that was prophetic, anticipated this period—whose advent, few then thought, was among the possibilities of the future—when an increasing white population, and a more active competition for employment, would make it apparent to both races that they must separate, and that the weaker of the two would be obliged to remove, by the force of circumstances which no human power could control.

Against this time, it was the policy of the State to provide, and they did it, by appropriating \$200,000 to the preparation of a place to which the free people of color and emancipated slaves might be removed, with their own consent, on the coast of Africa. This fund was placed under charge of three Managers appointed by the Governor, giving bond, and acting without compensation. After a time, they found it better to employ the agency of the Maryland State Colonization Society, a body incorporated by the State, and enjoying an income from individual contributions and other sources. The Managers made reports of their proceedings from time to time, to the Executive—the annual meetings of the State Society were generally held in Annapolis; its operations were kept before the public eye—attempts were sometimes made in the Legislature to withdraw the State's appropriation, when the results of the whole subject, and the condition, population and growth of the Colony, for the establishment of which the funds of the State were used, were made matters of discussion—so that it may be fairly said, that the colony of Maryland in Liberia, contemplated generally by the Legislature of 1831, has grown to its present shape and consistency under the auspices of the State. It is an illustration, not less of the wisdom than the humanity of the authors of the act of 1831. It now presents the place to which the free colored people of the State may emigrate, when they shall become satisfied that it is their interest to do so. Thus far, the obligation which their presence among us, without fault of their own, as a distinct race, has imposed upon us, has been discharged, and the committee are satisfied from the information that has been afforded them, that an eligible and happy home has been prepared for all those who choose to seek it on the coast of Africa.

Among the papers which have been submitted to the committee, are the reports of the Managers of the State fund and of the State Colonization Society, and which, although already before the House of Delegates, the committee desire to make a part of this report.

From these, it appears, that the entire expenditure of the State Society, has been \$317,049.18, of which \$186,922.16 was received from the Managers of the State fund—and the balance of \$130,127.02 was the contribution, in aid of the State's objects, from the State Society.

It also appears, that the number of emigrants sent from Mary-

land has been 1078—and that the public revenue of the colony, applicable to its support and defence is now upwards, somewhat, of \$2000, and is steadily increasing. For other particulars in regard to the colony, the committee refer to the report already mentioned.

The Managers and the Society both state, that the colony is not yet able to maintain its present condition without aid from this country; that its income is not sufficient, yet, to meet its civil list; and that the necessity, yet, of paying for the transportation of emigrants to it, and their maintenance for a season after their arrival, requires means, to be obtained on this side of the Atlantic; and they unite in urging upon the State, the continuation of the appropriation of \$10,000 per annum, which has heretofore been paid, under the act of 1831, and which expired by limitation, with the year just ended.

It is very strongly represented to the Committee, and the experience of some of them confirms the statement, that of late, within perhaps the last two years, a change has taken place in the opinions of the free people of color, in regard to colonization; and that they now admit, that sooner or later, they will have to adopt the alternative of colonization, rather than remain in the State; and, it is urged, with much reason, upon the Committee, that the increasing emigration, which must be the result of this change of opinion, is, in itself, the only means through which the colony will be enabled, with the increase of its population, to bear all of its expenses without further help from the United States. And, it is further urged, that a check to the emigration at this time, for a want of means consequent upon a discontinuance of the State's appropriation, would be greatly to be deplored, and would operate, materially, to retard the accomplishment of the State's object in becoming, originally, a contributor to the cause of Colonization.

In the propriety of these views, the Committee are most ready to concur. To stop now, when the object to be accomplished under the act of 1831, is on the eve of completion, would be to deny the policy of a legislation which circumstances shew to have been most wise and just.

The Committee are satisfied with the prudence that has marked the expenditure of the funds of the State, and acknowledge the advantages that have resulted from the employment of the agency of the State Society; and having every reason to rely upon the same care and judgment for the future that have been exhibited in the past, they recommend the continuance of the State's appropriation for the further period of ten years, unless the Legislature choose to repeal it in the meanwhile.

The Committee deem it only proper to say, in this connection, that they do not look upon the number of emigrants that have been transported to Africa, by the State Society, as, by any means, the

proper standard by which to estimate the success of colonization. The true standard is the condition and capacity of the colony, in view of the purposes for which it was established. Does it afford a safe and comfortable home, in a congenial climate, to which the free people of color may emigrate when circumstances shall make it their interest to do so presently, at the expense of the State and others—hereafter, as commerce grows up between the two countries, at their own expense, as German and Irish emigrants now come to America? If this question can be satisfactorily answered, and the Committee believe that it can be, the Society has done all that could be reasonably required of it, and has fulfilled, so far, the purpose of its existence.

Nor do the Committee believe that the small number already transported to Africa, affords any argument against the efficiency of colonization to remove the entire free colored population of the State, whenever this population finds it their interest to remove. The foreign immigration into Baltimore, alone, in 1847, was 12,009—not one individual of which, probably, had his expenses paid for him. The same emigration from Maryland to Liberia, would, *in six years*, carry off the entire free colored population of the State. That there should be such an emigration, it is necessary that there should be a desire to emigrate, and the means for emigration. Circumstances are producing the first, and the growth of the colonies on the coast, the result of these circumstances, is rapidly creating the commerce that will afford the last.

The Committee submit herewith a Bill, to carry out the recommendations of this report.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN FLEMING, Chairman.