

prospective plan, looking to the riddance of this State, of the free negro and mulatto population thereof, and their colonization in Africa.”

Although more than three months have elapsed since that committee was raised, the nature and importance of the subject committed to their charge, was of such peculiar character as to forbid any hasty report; and the delay has been occasioned more by the difference in mode than the object sought to be secured. It will readily appear, that the duties of the committee were those of no sinecure office.\* For, while to obtain the necessary information asked for in the order, they had to wade through a labyrinth of statistics, diffused through a lapse of 60 years; they had to meet, also, the more difficult task of recommending to the Convention some feasible plan, by which to consummate the ultimate design of colonization, viz—the riddance of and settlement in Africa, the free colored population of this State.

The first point to which the attention of the committee was called, was the actual numbers of said population at the several censuses, &c.

By the census of 1790, the free negro population of this State amounted to

|                   |                  |     |        |
|-------------------|------------------|-----|--------|
|                   |                  |     | 8,043  |
| By census of 1800 | they amounted to |     | 19,587 |
| do.               | 1810             | do. | 33,927 |
| do.               | 1820             | do. | 39,730 |
| do.               | 1830             | do. | 52,938 |
| do.               | 1840             | do. | 62,020 |
| do.               | 1850             | do. | 73,158 |

Thus, from the foregoing it appears that while in 1790 there were but 8,043 free people of color in the State, at the end of the seventh decade there 73,158, making a constant annual increase of 1,052, for the whole period of 60 years.

The slave population of 1790 were 103,036, while in 1850 it numbers 90,000, making an annual decrease for the same time of 217. The white population in 1790 numbered 208,649; and in 1850, 412,803,—showing an annual increase for 60 years, just expired, of 3,404; not having doubled their number in that time, while the free negroes in same time have duplicated their numbers nine times over; or while the whites have increased upon their numbers less than 100 per ct. for the last sixty years, the free negroes have increased over 900 per ct.

The relative rate of increase between whites and free colored from 1790 to 1850, will appear by the following table:—

Allegany county in 1790 had 1 free colored to 278 whites—in 1840, 1 to 68—in 1850, 1 to 54.

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\*The committee take pleasure in returning their thanks to Jno. H. B. Latrobe, Esq., of Balt. city, for his kindness, in furnishing much of the statistics and other data contained in this report.