

"We were in the midst of a vast plain bordered in the far distance by low hills. The rice fields which surrounded us formed an immense checker board. Here many men were toiling, plunged to their knees in water. Even the sight of so strange a creature as a European must have seemed to them, hardly made them stop for a moment from their toil. From time to time the soldier who conducted our party would cause one of the workmen to raise his head, by asking him which one to take of the little crests of solid earth which separate the fields, and form the only paths."

These paths are so narrow that only one person or animal can walk upon them at a time.

"Suddenly, we saw, walking solemnly towards us, a majestic looking old man, bearing a long and beautifully carved cane, such as is known among the Koreans as the "staff of age." He did not appear to be of a high rank, but at the sight of him each member of my long single file of sol-

diers, bearers and servants, hastened to step aside and leave the narrow path free for him, even though to do so they had to plunge knee-deep into the muddy waters of the rice field. I, too, hastened to turn my horse into the water, for I would not wish a European to be outdone in paying homage to the majesty of age.

"As the old man passed on with an air of unconscious, but absolute royalty, he rewarded our deference, as any gracious sovereign might, with a look of calm friendliness. Being a Korean, he knew that, however poor he might be, he was more worthy of respect than we by reason of his many years. In my heart I sighed to think how far, how very far, are we of Europe from the true politeness of this almost unknown country."

If M. Varet had not himself been so polite perhaps he might have added that even Europeans treat the aged with much more respect than some whom we do not like to name, because we also are Americans.—*Goldthwaite's Geographical Magazine.*

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AT WHAT DATE WILL THE EARTH BE ENTIRELY PEOPLED?

BY E. G. RAVENSTEIN.

IN order to answer this query at all satisfactorily, it is necessary to determine: (1) The present population of the world and its probable increase. (2) The area capable of being cultivated for the yield of food and other necessities of life. (3) The total number of people whom these lands would be able to maintain. I need hardly point out that a precise answer to these apparently simple questions is well-nigh impossible.

The Present Population of the World.—This is a fundamental question for the inquiry proposed, but it is quite impossible to reply to it with

any amount of confidence. Enumerations of the people have been made in all civilized States, but with respect to large parts of the world we are still completely in the dark. Of Africa we know next to nothing, whilst the long array of figures presented to us as the results of a census taken in China are not calculated to inspire confidence. I have taken some care to form a true estimate of the population of Africa, and I cannot believe in that continent supporting more than 127 millions, instead of the two, three, or even four hundred millions allotted to it by certain