

General Register Office, December 7, 1848.

SIR—

On the 5th August, 1842, by the direction of Secretary Sir James Graham, I transmitted for the use of the Secretary of State for the Colonies some suggestions respecting the mode of taking a Census in each of our Colonial Possessions, as requested by Lord Stanley.

I am about to publish the Population of England and Wales, as lately arranged with respect to the Districts into which this Country is now divided for the purpose of registering Births and Deaths, together with a comparative view of the results of the last Five Censuses. I have also been furnished with the latest returns of the Population in several Countries in Europe. It occurs to me that it might be desirable also to publish the Population of our Colonial Possessions.

I therefore take the liberty of requesting that you will have the goodness to call the attention of Earl Grey to this subject, and to submit to his Lordship my request, that I may be furnished with Abstracts of the Population of such of our Colonies as may have made returns upon the subject, to the Colonial Office, in accordance with the Memorandum which I had the honor of transmitting through Secretary Sir James Graham, on 5th August, 1842.

If I am not taking too great a liberty, I should also venture to suggest that it may perhaps be expedient that steps should be taken to secure a Census, being made in each of our Colonies, in 1851, on or about the same day, that Parliament may fix for its being taken in this Country.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

GEORGE GRAHAM,
Registrar General.

B. Hawes, Esq., M. P., &c. &c., Colonial Office.

MEMORANDUM.

A Census cannot be taken in precisely the same form in all Her Majesty's Colonies; as the condition of the respective Populations, and the means of ascertaining the facts, differ in different parts. It is desirable, nevertheless, to preserve uniformity as far as is practicable; and I have had one Form drawn out, of which I recommend the general adoption, subject to the requisite modifications, some of which I shall notice very briefly.

1. The Population should be enumerated in a convenient number of enumeration Districts, comprehended in the established divisions of the Colonies; the area of which should be given (when known), in square Acres or square Miles. The Population of the Towns should be enumerated within boundaries strictly defined; for unless the boundaries are known, the results of successive Censuses cannot be compared.

2. Where the habitations are not fixed the People might be enumerated in Tribes and Families.

3. The enumerations should be made at equal intervals of time (annually or quinquennially) on one day, if possible—comprising the persons in each District on the previous night, at a season of the year when the facts can be recorded with most facility, and when there is no great displacement of the Population by festivals or by other causes.

NOTE.—Persons from home should be enumerated at the place in which they happen to be on the Census night; the words “(visitor),” “(traveller,)” &c. being