

A comparison of the census reports for the United States and this country discloses some remarkable facts relating to the distribution of population and the source of wealth in the two countries.—Here the population of our agricultural districts diminishes, there it increases rapidly. Between 1850 and 1860 the population of the seven North-Western states, where soil and climate especially adapt them to corn-growing, nearly doubled; in 1860 it was 5,543,382. The war checked the progress of population in America, and it postponed the fulfilment of Mr. McCulloch's prediction that America would cease to export wheat. He estimated that the population of the United States in 1884 would reach 60,000,000; according to the latest return in 1860 it was 31,445,080. The progress of the older and the manufacturing States has been greatly interrupted. The increase of the mileage of railways in the United States reads us an instructive lesson. In 1850 the total mileage was 9,021; in 1860 it was 30,634; this astonishing progress was then interrupted; it was, in fact, arrested in the Southern States, and greatly checked in the Atlantic and New England States; but in the interior, or agricultural States; is still went on. We find that in 1864 the total increase in the four years was 4,274 miles, and more than one-half of this was in the interior corn-growing States. But it is important to note the details of the increase just referred to of more than 21,000 miles between 1850 and 1860.

That of the interior corn-growing States was nearly 12,000 miles, and that of the Southern States 5,400 miles. This wonderful opening up of the agricultural districts was followed by a war, which left them untouched by comparison, but which destroyed industry and population in the other States. It might have been expected that other countries would have been deluged with American corn, especially when the Southern market was closed, but this was not the case; the average surplus of wheat, for exportation has been one slightly increased.

In a country where the usual breadth of wheat is 12 to 13 millions of acres, and the crop is extremely various, there is a large surplus in favourable years; hence America was fortunately able to supply our deficiency in 1861 and 1862. The usual exports of wheat and flour to this country for the six previous and six subsequent years, were about 1,100,000 and 1,400,000 quarters a year. Part of this increase was due to the wheat grown in Upper Canada, which is sent to New York or into the New England States by the Grand Trunk Railway, which now brings the best part of the country into connection with lake and river navigation.

Considering the great increase of the means of communication, the actual addition to the amount of corn exported has been so small that it is evident the country is not "opened up" by the stimulus of the export trade, but by the increase of the home demand.

It is only the surplus of abundant years that is exported from America. At present prices it does not pay to grow wheat specially for exportation. This is a very important feature of the American wheat trade; it is illustrated by the scarcity of maize in the country during the last year or two, notwithstanding that maize can be grown for one-third the price of wheat; English consumers, for a long period, had to pay 40s. per quarter for it. It is only the surplus which is exported, and any circumstance which reduces the amount of the surplus, or increases the demand for it, must raise the price. In the case of wheat, when other countries compete with us, as Ireland has done of late years for maize, the surplus will be more diffused. Under the stimulus of high prices during the Crimean war, wheat was grown for exportation; but at the present price, 50s. a quarter, the area of wheat will not increase.

Settlers in Minnesota—a wheat not a maize country—assure us that it does not pay to grow wheat for exportation. In all probability the competition of other countries will oblige us to pay dearer for wheat in future years, in order to secure continued, or rather, increasing supplies, and this may occasion a reaction against the constant increase in this country in the area of pasture land—an increase which the country regards with complacency, because it is supposed to increase the number of live stock; but the conversion of arable to pasture has not prevented the rise, for many years past, in the price of meat.

If, as we anticipate, the competition of other countries occasions a gradual rise in the price of wheat also, the "food question" will become an urgent public question; and the discussion which will then take place will, no doubt, add greatly to the very meagre stock of knowledge possessed at present by the public at large on certain agricultural and economic questions.—*Agricultural Gazette*.

We learn from a contemporary that on Thursday week 20 head of Shorthorn milch cows were dispatched by Mr. W. Henderson, Hargate House, Darlington, to Sweden, the animals having been purchased by Baron O. d'Akerhjelm, on behalf of the Swedish Government. Mr. Henderson annually sells a quantity of stock to the Belgian Government; and though this is his first sale to the Swedish Government, it is more than probable that it will be continued every year.

Poultry Yard.

FATTENING FOWLS.

"J. L. E." asks if any of our correspondents will inform him if they have tried the French plan of fattening fowls described in the *Times* one day last winter; and of what ingredients the liquid paste with which the fowls are fed is composed? Also, what has been the success of the experiment.

If we understand his question, it is the mode of cramming fowls by machinery, as noticed in the daily papers some time since. If we be correct in our supposition (we write from memory only), the article alluded to spoke of the practice as common abroad. We are inclined to think that this is not the case, and where it is practised it is more as a crotchet than as a business proceeding. The best description of the *modus operandi* with which we are acquainted is as follows:—

"He who would fatten his fowls, provides himself with some fine barley flour, not barley meal, but barley flour from which the bran has been carefully separated at the mill. This flour is carefully manipulated so as to be free from lumps, and then made into a sort of gruel with equal parts of water and of milk. This gruel is described by a French writer, who would seem to be equally at home in the kitchen and poultry yard, as being about the thickness of a clear soup when it begins to cook. It is necessary that exactly equal portions of milk and water be used; as if the milk preponderates the bird will progress for a few days and retrograde, get thin and die. The first implement is a common funnel the end of the pipe being cut diagonally and the edge turned round so that there be no chance of its tearing or wounding the gullet. The head of the cup or receiver of the funnel has a ring affixed to it, of sufficient size to take the forefinger of the operator. The position of the ring is important, for it is necessary that, holding with one hand the head of the bird, one should be able with the other to introduce the funnel in the required position into the gullet of the subject. Those who are accustomed to its use have little or no risk or trouble with the funnel, but beginners are recommended to cover the end of the pipe with india rubber and so avoid the chance of irritating and wounding the gullet.

"The gruel being ready, it is placed in a deep pan and a large ladle with it. The bird is taken by the wings close to the shoulders, and put between the knees, its head being in front, so as to hold it without crushing or smothering it. The bird kicks, cries, and struggles a good deal at first, but soon gets accustomed to it, and accepts its fate with resignation. As soon as it is quiet on