

meration were so constantly thrusting themselves into the narrative that any attempt at accuracy would not permit the omission, and therefore compelled a somewhat critical examination of the various estimates and enumerations of the Indians. The mass of matter brought into view is too great to be summed up at the moment in answer to your inquiry, but I beg to submit the following outline, which is as nearly accurate as can be made at this date, by Maj. S. N. Clark, the gentleman specially charged with the investigation :

ESTIMATES OF THE INDIAN POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

In considering the following statement of Indian population at different periods from 1790 to 1876 several things should be remembered and heeded :

1. It is entirely impracticable to present any trustworthy statement of the number of Indians in the whole territory comprised within the present limits of the United States in 1790, or at any subsequent period down to about the year 1850.* All enumerations and estimates prior to the latter date were based on fragmentary and otherwise insufficient data. Our official intercourse with the Indian tribes at the beginning of this century did not extend much beyond the Ohio River and the Mississippi, from its confluence with the Ohio to the Gulf of Mexico ; and our information respecting the number of Indian tribes beyond, and their numerical strength, was extremely meager and indefinite. The number of Indian tribes in official relations with the United States steadily increased from 1778, the date of our first Indian treaty, to within a few years.

2. Such estimates and enumerations as have been presented do not coincide (except in two instances, 1820 and 1870) in date with the years in which the regular census of the United States was taken ; nor do they appear at regular intervals.

3. It is almost invariably true that estimates of the numbers of an Indian tribe exceed the real numbers ; and, from the nature of the case, all official enumerations, until within a very recent period, have necessarily included many estimates, and are, for that reason, inaccurate.

4. The United States census returns before 1850 did not include Indians.

ESTIMATE OF SECRETARY OF WAR, 1789.

General Knox, Secretary of War, in a report to the President, dated June 15, 1789, estimates the entire number of Indians in the United States at that time at 76,000. He does not specify the several tribes.

ESTIMATES OF INDIAN POPULATION IN 1791.

Imlay, in his *Topographical Description of the Western Territory*, published in London in 1797, after a comparison of the published statements of Croghan, Bouquet, Carver, Hutchins, and Dodge, and the accounts of others familiar with the Indians, estimates the number of Indians "who inhabit the country from the Gulf of Mexico on both sides of the Mississippi to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and as far west as the country has been explored, that is, to the headwaters of the Mississippi, and from thence to the Missouri (I do not mean the head of it), and between that river and Santa Fé," at "less than 60,000."

* This remark is almost equally true of estimates and enumerations from 1850 to the present time.