

XV. OCCUPATIONS AND WEALTH.

OCCUPATIONS—OF HEADS OF FAMILIES IN PHILADELPHIA AND SOUTHWARK IN 1790—IN UNITED STATES IN 1850 AND 1900—APPROXIMATE WEALTH IN 1790—INDUSTRY AND WEALTH, 1850 AND 1900.

Population change in the United States is closely connected with national prosperity. Throughout the century the citizens of the Republic, whether native or foreign, have continually expanded their enterprises, and created and maintained an insistent demand for labor. This in turn, as pointed out by Malthus at the close of the eighteenth century, stimulated population increase at certain periods, and in many localities.

OCCUPATIONS.

The character of the occupations in which the people of a community are engaged affects to some degree the increase of population, through exerting a direct influence upon the health, vitality, temperament, and happiness of the active workers. During at least the first half century of the existence of the Republic, and possibly longer, the occupations of the people were conducive to health and industrial independence, and therefore in general tended to encourage population increase.

It is unfortunate that none of the earlier censuses afford any satisfactory returns from which to compute the number of persons engaged even in the principal callings. Except for Southwark and part of Philadelphia, the schedules of the First Census contain no information upon this important subject. Such information as is presented for these two relates only to heads of families. The fact that the enumerator, soon after completing his work, published a city directory in which he utilized the information contained upon the schedules, suggests that the gratuitous information there shown was obtained with the intention of ultimate use in this directory, rather than for census purposes. After the passage of a century, however, the Philadelphia and Southwark returns possess some interest, in that they reflect the activities of the metropolis of the Republic in 1790, as shown by the callings of heads of households.

Occupations of heads of families in Philadelphia and Southwark in 1790.—At the First Census the popula-

tion of Philadelphia and of Southwark was returned as follows:

CITY.	Heads of families.	Total population.
Philadelphia.....	4,312	28,522
Northern district (between Vine and Race streets).....	878	3,938
Middle district (from the north side of Chestnut street to the south side of Race street).....	1,930	13,674
Southern district (from the south side of Chestnut street to the north side of South street).....	1,504	10,910
Southwark.....	970	5,663

The occupations of the heads of families were returned for the middle and southern districts, comprising 3,434 heads of families (79.6 per cent of the total number) and 24,584 population, and for the whole of Southwark. A classification of the occupations shown results as follows:

TABLE 72.—Heads of families in the middle and southern districts of Philadelphia, and in Southwark, classified according to occupation: 1790.

OCCUPATION.	Middle and southern districts of Philadelphia.	Southwark.
All heads of families.....	3,434	970
Returned with occupation.....	2,768	827
Agricultural pursuits.....	15	3
Professional service.....	220	35
Artists.....	2	1
Attorneys at law.....	25	2
Clergymen.....	11	4
Doctors of physic, surgeons, dentists, etc.....	27	4
Officials (government).....	79	10
Schoolmasters and professors.....	71	14
All other professional services.....	5	.....
Domestic and personal service.....	443	236
Barbers and hairdressers.....	50	3
Boarding and lodging house keepers.....	17	9
Inn and tavern keepers.....	128	22
Laborers, porters, helpers, etc.....	239	200
Nurses and midwives.....	.....	2
Trade and transportation.....	934	183
Bankers and brokers.....	27	1
Clerks and accountants.....	20	5
Draymen and carters.....	14	3
Hucksters and peddlers.....	26	1
Merchants and dealers.....	779	57
Sea captains, mariners, mates, etc.....	68	116

TABLE 72.—*Heads of families in the middle and southern districts of Philadelphia, and in Southwark, classified according to occupation: 1790—Continued.*

OCCUPATION.	Middle and southern districts of Philadelphia.	Southwark.
Returned with occupation—Continued.		
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.....	1,146	370
Bakers and confectioners.....	88	21
Blacksmiths.....	58	31
Brewers.....	15	2
Brickmakers and potters.....	11	1
Bricklayers.....	18	8
Butchers.....	30	5
Cabinetmakers.....	17	8
Carpenters and joiners:		
House.....	166	43
Ship.....	3	76
Clock and watch makers.....	12	1
Coopers.....	35	27
Goldsmiths and silversmiths.....	20	3
Harness and saddle makers.....	30	1
Leather curriers and tanners.....	27	1
Mantua-makers and seamstresses.....		7
Metal workers.....	34	1
Painters, glaziers, etc.....	31	7
Plasterers.....	11	4
Printers, bookbinders, etc.....	40	2
Ropemakers.....	5	16
Shoemakers.....	165	42
Stonecutters.....	8	4
Tailors.....	189	28
Textile workers.....	37	2
Tinmen.....	17	2
Weavers.....	2	17
Wheelwrights.....	13	3
Miscellaneous industries.....	67	7
Returned without occupation.....	1,676	2143

¹ Includes 51 reported as "gentlemen."
² Includes 9 reported as "gentlemen."

The above table indicates that about four-fifths of the heads of families in the two districts of Philadelphia under consideration, and a slightly larger proportion of those in Southwark, were gainfully employed. The classification of the 1790 returns available for Philadelphia and Southwark under the 5 main occupation groups employed by the Census results as follows:

OCCUPATION GROUP.	PHILADELPHIA.		SOUTHWARK.	
	Heads of families.	Per cent distribution.	Heads of families.	Per cent distribution.
All occupations.....	2,758	100.0	827	100.0
Agricultural pursuits.....	15	0.5	3	0.4
Professional service.....	220	8.0	35	4.2
Domestic and personal service.....	443	16.1	236	28.5
Trade and transportation.....	934	33.9	183	22.1
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.....	1,146	41.6	370	44.7

From the proportions indicated for the different groups, it is clear that Southwark, like many towns on the outskirts of large cities at the present time, included a large proportion of persons who were wage-earners or followed the humbler callings.

The proportions shown for Philadelphia can not be compared with the occupation returns secured at recent censuses, because these include the occupations of all persons gainfully employed, whether heads of families or not. The number and proportion of persons above the age of 10 reported in each occupation group in Philadelphia in 1900 were as follows:

OCCUPATION GROUP.	PERSONS GAINFULLY EMPLOYED.	
	Number.	Per cent distribution.
All occupations.....	568,923	100.0
Agricultural pursuits.....	5,642	1.0
Professional service.....	23,071	4.9
Domestic and personal service.....	123,751	21.8
Trade and transportation.....	152,262	26.8
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.....	259,197	45.6

Occupations in the United States in 1850 and 1900.

The first reasonably complete return of the occupations of individuals was that of 1850. Some comparisons can be made of proportions shown in that year with similar proportions in 1900. Even for so brief a period as the half century which elapsed from 1850 to 1900, however, comparisons can not be entirely satisfactory. The activities of the community have been in a state of continual expansion. While certain occupations, such as agriculture, have remained the same, or so nearly the same that comparison can readily be made, other lines of activity have changed so greatly as to make comparisons misleading, and in many instances impossible. From year to year new occupations are created, drawing some of the activities of the community from the older callings, and these in turn are surpassed in importance by others. Thus, even though a standard occupation, or group of occupations, may have grown steadily and perhaps to a remarkable degree, the proportionate part which it forms of all callings may have tended to become less.

In 1850, 90.8 per cent of all white males 15 years of age and over were gainfully employed; in 1900 the corresponding percentage was 87.6. The distribution of this element of the population in 5 occupation groups is as follows:

TABLE 73.—*Number and per cent distribution of white males 15 years of age and over engaged in 5 main groups of occupations: 1850 and 1900.*

OCCUPATION GROUP.	1850		1900	
	Number.	Per cent distribution.	Number.	Per cent distribution.
All occupations.....	5,210,047	100.0	19,981,794	100.0
Agricultural pursuits.....	12,298,870	44.1	7,195,521	36.0
Professional service.....	159,490	0.1	700,100	4.0
Domestic and personal service.....	978,131	18.8	2,689,133	13.4
Trade and transportation.....	481,741	9.3	3,949,262	19.8
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.....	1,291,875	24.8	5,354,698	26.8

¹ Not including 42,370 students and cadets and 119,309 free colored males.

Possibly the most significant fact shown by the foregoing table is the marked increase during the last half century in the relative importance of trade and transportation, at the expense of agricultural pursuits and of domestic and personal service. While in 1900, as in 1850, agriculture gave employment to a larger

number than any other class, the proportion in this group decreased during the half century.

INDUSTRY AND WEALTH.

No reliable statistics either of the industry or of the wealth of the nation at the beginning of Constitutional Government can be obtained.¹ Attention has already been directed, however, to the fact that in 1790 the population was almost entirely agricultural. Moreover, it has been shown that at the period under consideration urban population was almost a negligible quantity, and that the variations in social and economic conditions were much less marked than they are to-day. Hence there is some justification for the belief that property, limited in amount though it was, was much more evenly distributed in 1790 than at the present time. The total lack of statistics upon this subject justifies some computation, provided a reasonable basis can be found.

Approximate wealth in 1790.—It has already been shown that in 1790 the population of the Republic was engaged principally in agricultural pursuits; indeed, it has been estimated that agriculture supported 90 per cent of the people. If it be granted that at least a very large proportion of the people were so engaged, it may be assumed that in most instances a dwelling represented a farm, so that the number of houses must roughly indicate the number of farms, or of buildings of similar average value in villages and towns. To this number should be added the business properties which existed in all fair-sized communities.

The number of dwellings in the United States in 1790 has been established with reasonable accuracy in a preceding chapter as 464,309. Dr. James Mease states, in *A Picture of Philadelphia*, published in 1811, that in 1790 the city contained 6,651 dwelling houses and 415 stores and workshops. It thus appears that in Philadelphia, at the period of the First Census, the number of buildings other than dwellings (and the outhouses connected with or dependent upon dwellings) was equivalent to approximately 7 per cent of all dwellings. If the proportion here shown for Philadelphia be assumed to be correct for the country as a whole, the entire number of stores, factories, workshops, churches, and public buildings was 32,501. This, added to the number of dwellings, makes a total of 496,810 buildings, most of which, as already suggested, were houses upon farms.

In 1900 the average value of farms was \$2,200. If about one-third of this figure, or \$700, be accepted as representing an approximate average value for all real estate holdings, and to this figure be added the approximate value of slaves as already established,²

and an allowance for all other values, including farm animals, the following results appear:

Buildings and real estate.....	\$347,767,000
Slaves.....	104,643,600
All other property, including farm animals.....	100,000,000
Total.....	552,410,600

As admitted at the outset, no accurate measurement of the wealth of the nation at the beginning of Constitutional Government has been or can be made; but the foregoing analysis serves at least to indicate that in 1790 the value of all property could not greatly have exceeded \$500,000,000 according to the standards of value at that time.

If the total here shown is accepted as representing a fair approximation of the value existing at the period under consideration, the per capita value, based upon the free population shown in 1790, was \$171. It will be remembered, however, that standards of value at the close of the eighteenth century were much lower than at the present time, so that in present day terms the values above shown would probably be represented by not less than twice the figures stated. Hence, if computed according to the standards of 1900, a total valuation of \$552,410,600 in 1790 would represent not less than \$1,000,000,000 in 1900, and a per capita valuation of between \$300 and \$400.

Upon the basis of wealth as outlined above, the aggregate and per capita wealth of the United States in 1790, by specified geographic divisions, was as follows:

TABLE 74.—*Aggregate and per capita wealth of the free population, by geographic divisions: 1790.*

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION.	Aggregate.	Per capita.
United States.....	\$552,410,600	\$170.02
New England.....	138,731,444	137.08
Middle states.....	141,320,442	145.41
Southern states.....	272,358,514	217.07

From this computation it appears probable that at the period of the First Census the per capita wealth of the free population was greatest in the Southern states. The known facts undoubtedly serve to substantiate this conclusion. In the Southern states the population was comparatively small considering the area; the farms had become plantations, in connection with which the value not only of the real property, improvements, and live stock, but also of slaves, was to be considered. The leadership of the South in wealth is further indicated by the fact that in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 the Southern states demanded representation according to their free population and three-fifths of the number of their slaves, on the ground that they possessed larger property interests than the Northern states, so that, if direct taxes on property were imposed by the Federal

¹ Mulhall places the aggregate wealth of the United States in 1790 at \$620,000,000, divided as follows: Lands, \$479,000,000; houses, etc., \$141,000,000.

² See page 141.

Government, they would have to pay larger amounts in proportion to their representation.

The great wealth which the New England and Middle states have acquired during the century following the first enumeration has resulted principally from extraordinary industrial development. In 1790 the inhabitants of the New England states were engaged almost exclusively in agriculture; with the meager agricultural resources existing in that section it could not be expected that, even with the highest development, farm values and farm products would prove proportionately large when compared with those

in portions of the Republic more highly favored by climate and fertility of soil. Practically the same conditions prevailed in the Middle states, although somewhat greater natural resources, and the increased values resulting from such cities as New York and Philadelphia, served to make the per capita value of property slightly greater than that of New England.

Comparison of 1850 with 1900.—The following table presents such comparisons as are possible concerning the material resources of continental United States, and also of the area enumerated in 1790, at the censuses from 1850 to 1900:

TABLE 75.—COMPARISON OF GROWTH IN AREA, POPULATION, AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, AND NATIONAL WEALTH, FOR THE TOTAL AREA OF CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES AND FOR THE AREA ENUMERATED IN 1790: 1850 TO 1900.

CENSUS YEAR.	CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES.						
	Area enumerated.		Population.	Agriculture.		Manufactures—value of products.	National wealth—value of all property.
	Square miles.	Per cent area enumerated in 1790 forms of total area enumerated at each census.		Acres of improved land.	Value of farm property. ¹		
1850.....	1,519,170	27.5	23,191,876	113,032,614	\$3,967,343,580	\$1,019,106,616	² \$7,135,780,228
1860.....	1,951,520	21.4	31,443,321	163,110,720	7,980,493,063	1,885,861,676	² 16,159,616,063
1870.....	2,126,290	19.6	38,558,371	188,921,069	8,944,857,749	2,232,325,442	² 24,054,614,806
1880.....	2,727,454	15.3	50,155,783	284,771,042	³ 12,180,501,538	5,369,579,191	43,642,000,000
1890.....	2,974,159	14.0	62,947,714	357,616,755	³ 16,082,267,689	9,372,378,843	65,037,091,197
1900.....	2,974,159	14.0	75,994,575	414,498,487	20,439,901,164	13,010,036,514	88,517,306,775
Increase:							
1850 to 1860.....	432,350	.....	8,251,445	50,078,106	4,013,149,483	866,755,060	9,023,835,840
1860 to 1870.....	174,770	.....	7,115,050	25,810,379	964,364,686	2,346,403,768	7,895,198,738
1870 to 1880.....	601,164	.....	11,597,412	95,849,943	3,235,643,789	1,137,253,749	19,587,185,194
1880 to 1890.....	246,705	.....	12,791,931	72,846,713	3,901,766,151	4,002,799,652	21,395,091,197
1890 to 1900.....	.....	.....	13,046,861	56,881,732	4,357,033,475	3,637,657,671	23,480,215,578

CENSUS YEAR.	AREA ENUMERATED IN 1790.							
	Population.		Agriculture.		Manufactures—value of products.		National wealth—value of all property.	
			Acres of improved land.		Value of farm property. ¹			
	Number.	Per cent of total.	Number.	Per cent of total.	Amount.	Per cent of total.	Amount.	Per cent of total.
1850.....	14,569,584	62.8	70,223,511	62.1	\$2,613,595,463	65.9	\$335,489,765	81.2
1860.....	17,326,157	55.1	81,933,952	50.2	4,195,624,939	52.5	1,407,690,264	74.6
1870.....	19,687,504	51.6	80,672,316	42.7	4,136,676,463	34.0	2,967,465,381	70.0
1880.....	23,925,639	47.7	95,001,365	33.4	4,738,167,384	38.9	3,559,794,469	66.3
1890.....	28,188,321	44.8	97,235,805	27.2	4,828,788,468	30.0	5,563,835,986	59.4
1900.....	33,553,630	44.2	99,947,259	24.1	5,000,462,719	24.4	7,487,459,407	57.4
Increase:								
1850 to 1860.....	2,756,573	33.4	11,710,441	23.4	1,582,029,476	39.4	572,200,499	66.0
1860 to 1870.....	2,361,347	33.2	11,261,636	(*)	1,582,029,476	(*)	1,559,775,117	66.5
1870 to 1880.....	4,238,135	36.5	14,329,049	14.9	601,490,921	18.6	592,329,088	52.1
1880 to 1890.....	4,262,682	33.3	2,234,440	3.1	90,621,084	2.3	2,004,041,517	50.1
1890 to 1900.....	5,365,309	41.1	2,711,454	4.7	171,674,251	3.9	1,923,623,421	52.5

CENSUS YEAR.	PER CENT OF INCREASE.							
	Population—		Agriculture.		Manufactures—value of products—		National wealth—value of all property—	
			Acres of improved land—		Value of farm property—			
	Of total area.	Of area enumerated in 1790.	In total area.	In area enumerated in 1790.	In total area.	In area enumerated in 1790.	In total area.	In area enumerated in 1790.
1850 to 1860.....	35.6	18.9	44.3	16.7	101.2	60.5	85.1	126.5
1860 to 1870.....	22.6	13.6	15.8	11.5	12.1	11.4	124.4	110.8
1870 to 1880.....	30.1	21.5	50.7	17.8	36.2	14.5	26.9	20.0
1880 to 1890.....	25.5	17.8	25.6	2.4	32.0	1.9	74.5	58.3
1890 to 1900.....	20.7	19.0	15.9	2.8	27.1	3.6	38.8	34.6

¹ The value of farm property is included as a part of the national wealth.
² Taxable property only.

³ Including estimated value of range animals.
⁴ Decrease.

As shown by the table, the growth of the added area reduced the proportion which the area enumerated in 1790 formed of the total area by approximately one-half—from two-sevenths in 1850 to one-seventh in 1900. During the same period the proportion which the population, value of manufactured products, and national wealth in the original area formed of the corresponding totals for the United States, declined only about one-third. These changes reflect a noteworthy growth in the original area. On the other hand, the relative importance of agricultural operations in the original area, as measured both by the acreage of improved land and by the value of farm property, was only one-third as great in 1900 as in 1850—a fact which reflects the rapid development of the fertile areas in the West and Southwest.

When the changes in proportions outlined above are considered by decades, it is found that the changes in population, acreage of improved agricultural land, and value of manufactured products were progressive. It is significant that the decrease in the relative importance of the original area was more rapid during the early part of the half century than at its close. During the last decade the proportion of population decreased less than 1 per cent and that of manufactures but 2 per cent, while the proportion of national wealth showed an increase of 3 per cent. Only in the agricultural operations was a marked decrease still evident in the proportion contributed by the older area as compared with that of the newer.

The above analysis of proportions shown for the original area receives further confirmation upon examining the percentages of increase in Table 75. In every instance, except for the national wealth in the decades 1860 to 1870 and 1890 to 1900, the percentage of increase was higher for the country as a whole—and hence, obviously for the added area—than for the original area. Both areas showed marked increases in the value of manufactured products and in aggregate wealth. In the case of the two items used as a measure of changes in agriculture, however, the difference between the two areas is very striking—the original area showing relatively small increases, and in one decade, 1860 to 1870, a decrease.

The marked differences in the contributions of different sections to the national resources are clearly indicated by the following per capita values:

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION.	VALUE OF FARM PROPERTY.		VALUE OF MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS.		AGGREGATE WEALTH.	
	1850 ¹	1900 ²	1850 ¹	1900 ²	1850 ¹	1900 ²
Continental United States.	\$202.90	\$305.94	\$52.12	\$104.73	\$364.94	\$1,324.03
Area enumerated in 1790.....	204.72	164.22	65.44	245.90	386.23	1,323.39
New England and Middle states.....	199.58	143.87	84.29	314.71	308.74	1,553.00
Southern states.....	215.16	208.05	27.26	97.75	421.60	805.39
Added area.....	199.47	424.63	27.06	151.89	324.90	1,326.21

¹ Computed on basis of free population.
² Computed on basis of white population.

Discussion of the aggregate wealth of the original and added areas necessitates some reference to the value of slaves in 1850. Writers of that period ¹ estimated the average value per slave, for all ages, at \$400. Accepting this as an approximate figure, the total value of slaves was \$828,336,000 in the original area and \$451,809,600 in the added area, or about twice as great in the original slave states as in those erected from territory added after 1790. Out of a total valuation of the real and personal property in the slaveholding states amounting to nearly \$2,000,000,000, the value of slaves formed 43.5 per cent.

If the total wealth of the United States in 1790 (on the basis of the present standard of values) be accepted as approximately \$1,000,000,000, the increase from 1790 to 1900 approaches ninetyfold. During the period mentioned, the population of the United States increased fourteenfold; hence, while the population increased at a rate far in advance of that shown by any other civilized nation during the same period, the increase of wealth in the United States far outstripped that of population.

¹ The total value of all slaves in 1850 was \$1,280,145,600, computed upon the average value of \$400 per head (Hinton Helper: *The Impending Crisis*, page 306, Table 58, N. Y., 1860). The average value of boys and girls, men and women between the ages of about 15 and 25, as recorded by Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted (*A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, page 38), was \$739 in Virginia in 1853. If young children and men and women above the age of 25 be included to old age, it is probable that a general average of not more than \$400, as quoted by Helper, would result.