

ORGANIZATION OF TERRITORY OF ALASKA.

FEBRUARY 16, 1887.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HILL, from the Committee on the Territories, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 8757.]

The Committee on the Territories, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 8757) for the organization of the Territory of Alaska, and to provide for the establishment of a civil government therefor, having had the same under consideration, respectfully report said bill back to the House with the following amendments:

In section 4 strike out all after the word "Territory" in line 15.

In section 6, line 4, strike out the word "two" and insert the word "four."

In section 6, line 4, strike out the word "same," after the words "and shall receive the," and after the word "salaries" strike out "as the attorney."

In the same section, line 6, strike out the words "and marshal for the State of California, and double fees," and insert "hereinafter provided."

In section 7, line 5, after the word "thereto," insert the words "relating to homesteads, town, cities, and mining claims."

In section 7, line 33, strike out the words "homestead or pre-emption."

In section 7, line 39, after the word "location," insert the words "of homesteads."

In section 8, line 2, after the word "general," insert the words "register and receiver."

In section 8, line 7, after the words "surveyor general," insert the words "and register and receiver."

In section 8, line 10, strike out the word "four" and insert the word "three."

In section 8, line 13, strike out the word "four" and insert the word "three."

In section 8, line 16, after the word "each," insert the words "the register and receiver the same compensation as is provided by law for such officers in the other Territories of the United States."

In section 9, line 14, strike out the word "five" and insert the word "six."

In section 11, line 3, after the word "attorney" insert the words "register and receiver."

From the report of the governor of Alaska for the year 1886, the following statement is taken:

AREA—POPULATION.

Very few people in the States, even among the more intelligent, educated classes fully appreciate the immensity of the territory which was added to the public domain

by the purchase of Alaska. The total area of the United States proper, including the fully organized Territories, is 2,970,000 square miles. The best authorities up to a year ago credited Alaska with 581,107 square miles, but I have been informed by the Geological Survey in Washington that later and more accurate computations very materially increase these figures. Let this be as it may, an analysis will show, taking the figures quoted as being correct, that Alaska embraces more square miles of territory than twenty-one States of the Union east of the Mississippi River, viz, all the New England States, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia—States that are represented by forty-two Senators and two hundred Representatives in Congress. Sitting in my office at Sitka, I am very little, if any, farther, measuring in a straight line from Eastport, Me., than from the extreme western limit of my own jurisdiction, which extends beyond the most easterly point of Asia a distance of nearly 1,000 miles, to the 193d degree of west longitude. Embracing an area very nearly equal to one-fifth of all the States and organized Territories of the Union, with its great navigable rivers, interminable forests, and lofty mountain ranges, it would indeed be strange were it not possessed of natural resources the development of which is the only condition precedent to the growth of a rich and prosperous State. That these resources, if in fact they really exist, are as yet comparatively unknown is not to be wondered at, in view of its long-experienced neglect at the hands of the General Government.

No accurate enumeration of the inhabitants of Alaska has ever been made, unless it may have been prior to the purchase of the Territory by the United States. Nor is it possible, in my opinion, to arrive at more than a mere approximation of the number of native people, who live in widely scattered settlements, and whose roving habits would seem to baffle any effort, however painstaking, at a correct enumeration. Here at Sitka, where civilizing influences have been at work for years, and with better results, perhaps, than anywhere else in Southeastern Alaska, it would be very difficult, indeed, to make a fairly accurate count of the people who call the native village their home, for the reason that they are constantly on the move, and those found in the houses generally can give no account of those who are absent, either as to numbers, sex, or age.

Mr. Petroff, in volume 8, Tenth Census, makes the following statement as to the population of Alaska:

| Divisions. | Total. | White. | Creole. | Eskimo. | Alut. | Athabas- kan. | Thlinket. | Hyda. |
|--------------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Total | 33,426 | 430 | 1,756 | 17,617 | 2,145 | 3,927 | 6,763 | 788 |
| Arctic | 3,049 | ..... | ..... | 3,094 | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... |
| Yukon | 6,870 | 18 | 19 | 4,276 | ..... | 2,557 | ..... | ..... |
| Kuskokvim | 8,911 | 3 | 111 | 8,036 | 255 | 506 | ..... | ..... |
| Alutian | 2,451 | 82 | 479 | ..... | 1,890 | ..... | ..... | ..... |
| Kadiak | 4,352 | 34 | 917 | 2,211 | ..... | 864 | 326 | ..... |
| Southeastern | 7,748 | 293 | 230 | ..... | ..... | ..... | 6,437 | 788 |

This was the census of 1880. Later information enables the governor to give an estimate, which we also copy:

From the best information at hand I estimate the population of Southeastern Alaska to be about as follows:

White:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Sitka | 600 |
| Juneau | 1,500 |
| Douglas Island | 500 |
| Wrangel and vicinity | 150 |
| Killsnoo and vicinity | 150 |
| All other places | 200 |
| Total whites | 3,100 |
| Natives (about) | 7,500 |
| Total | 10,600 |

making a total of 35,261 whites, creoles, and natives. In the estimate for Southeastern Alaska I have made no distinction between the whites and the comparatively few creoles, for the reason that, in my opinion, the term creole is longer applicable to any

class of persons now residing in Alaska. The people called creoles are descendants, three or four generations remote, of a mixed parentage (Russian fathers and native mothers), it is true, but it will puzzle even the most learned ethnologist to find anything in their features or complexions by which to distinguish them from the race to which their fathers belonged. They are, to all intents and purposes, white people, fully as intelligent and well informed as would almost any other class of people have been, if subjected to the same wrongs and disadvantages—I do not mean the disadvantages of humble or may be illegitimate birth, but of petty tyranny and practical slavery under the old régime, followed by long-continued neglect to provide for their educational welfare under the new and professedly more liberal one. They, as well as the Aleuts, are civilized people, in the sense that the first were never in a condition of barbarism, while the last, if indeed not fully enlightened, have most certainly been reclaimed from their original savage state.

Under the rule of the Russian-American Company the creoles were given the same opportunities for acquiring an education as were afforded to pure-blood Russian children, up to a certain age, when they were compelled to enter the employ of the company for a long term of years. The brightest among the creoles and Aleutian boys were carefully trained in navigation, ship-building, and the mechanical arts, while the girls were taught housekeeping, and thus fitted to become wives of the company's employés, and I am reliably informed by old Russian residents that there are now in the Russian army and navy officers of very considerable rank, and a good many who hold high positions in the civil service of the Empire, who are the progeny of these mixed marriages. My most reliable information is to the effect that the Aleuts are a keen, bright, and naturally intelligent people, industrious and provident, the larger portion being educated to a greater or less extent in the Russian language, and that they are well advanced in civilization is evidenced by the fact that they live in comfortable houses, and are given to finery in their dress, and are, with scarcely an exception, devout members of one of the Christian churches. So far, therefore, as these two peoples are concerned, I do not hesitate in my opinion as to the consideration to which they are justly entitled, politically and otherwise. They are as fully competent to comprehend and discharge the duties of intelligent citizenship as are those who cast a large proportion, if indeed not a majority, of the votes in our large cities and in not a few of the rural communities.

The committee are of the opinion that the homestead laws at least should be extended to certain portions of the Territory of Alaska, to such portions and under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior, with the approval of the President, may prescribe from time to time. This power should be vested in the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of protecting the Government against depredations by unauthorized persons upon the timber and other vast interests in that immense Territory. No class of our population desire to emigrate to any Territory of the United States and brave the hardships and trials of a pioneer life without the means and opportunities of acquiring a home. This privilege is now denied those who emigrate to Alaska. That vast domain is undoubtedly a valuable domain and reasonable facilities and encouragements should be afforded for its development to those whose energy and spirit of adventure may lead them thither. The rapid increase of our population and the characteristic enterprise of our people afford reasonable grounds of belief that if the protecting care of the Government should be thrown around those who choose to emigrate to Alaska that it will greatly stimulate the influx of emigration to that country and partially solve the experiment of its development without cost to the Government in a few years. The mining interests of the country have been partially explored, and as yet there are no adequate data at hand to determine the extent and value of the mineral resources of that Territory.

The committee believe that the accompanying bill is sufficiently guarded in its provisions to protect the interests of the people of the United States and the settlers in Alaska, and they therefore recommend that the bill do pass.