

ENGLAND

Of its INHABITANTS,
their Number, Language,
Character

by
Edward & John Chamberlayne
1704

Inhabitants

ENGLAND hath been possessed by five several Nations, and coveted by many more; and no wonder so fair and rich a Lady should have many Lovers, it being a Country (as was said of the Tree in the midst of Paradise) *good for Food, pleasant to the Eyes, and to be desired*. Whereas the Highlands of *Scotland, Biscay, Switzerland*, and other like Countries, continue still in the possession of the *Aborigines*, of the first that laid Claim to them, none since judging it worth their pains to dispossess them.

The first Inhabitants in *England* are believed to be the *Britains*, descended from the *Gauls*, whose Language was almost the same; (See a late Book entitl'd *l'Antiquité de la Nation et de la Langue des Celtes* by Mr. *Pezron*, as also the *Archæologia Britannica* by the Ingenious Mr. *Edward Lhwyd*, Keeper of the *Ashmolean* Laboratory in *Oxford*;) subdued after by the *Romans*, who, by reason of their Troubles nearer home, were constrain'd to abandon this Country about 400 years after Christ; whereupon the *Picts*, Inhabitants of *Scotland*, invading the *Britains*, they call to their aid the *Saxons*, who chasing away the *Picts*, soon made themselves Masters of the *Britains*. But these not able to endure the heavy Yoke of the *Saxons*,

after many Battles and Attempts to recover their lost Liberties and Country, retired, or were driven, some of them into *Britaigne* in *France*, (from whence some think they first came) but most of them into the two utmost *Western* barren and mountainous parts of this Country, called afterwards by the *Saxons* *Walishland*, as the *Germans* still call *Italy Welshland*, because inhabited by the *Cisalpine Gauls*, and the *French* call our Country of *Britains*, *Le Pais de Galles*.

The *Saxons* solely possessed of all the best parts of this Isle, were for a long time infested, and for some time almost subdued by the *Danes*, and afterwards wholly by the *Normans*, who drove not out the *Saxons*, but mixed with them; so that the *English* Blood at this day is a mixture chiefly of *Norman* and *Saxon*, not without a Tincture of *Danish*, *Romish*, and *British* Blood.

Number of Inhabitants

To give the Reader an exact account of the Number of People in *England*, will be very difficult, but a near Conjecture may be thus made.*

England contains, according to the accurate Calculations of the judicious Mr. *Houghton*, in his Account of the Acres and Houses, with the proportional

* *Vid. Dr. Davenant's Book, How a People may be Gainers in the Ballance of Trade.*

Tax of each County of *England* and *Wales*, printed *Anno* 1693, 1175951 Houses. Now allowing to each House, one with another, 6 Persons, there will be found in all 7055706 Souls, and amongst them 1000000 of Fighting-men. All the Souls in *France* are computed at 13500000, or at the most 15000000, of which 270000 are Church-men, besides Nuns; the Clergy of England being scarce 20000.

Their Language

The *English* Tongue being at present much refined, exceeding copious, expressive and significant (by reason of a liberty taken by the Natives, of borrowing out of all other Languages what ever might conduce thereunto) is (as their Blood) a mixture, chiefly of the Old *Saxons* (a Dialect of the *Teutonick*) and the Old *Norman*, (a Dialect of the *French*) not without some savour of the *Britains*, *Romans*, and *Danes* Languages.

The *Romans* possessing *England*, caused their Tongue, the *Latin*, to be generally used in this Country.

The *Saxons* succeeding, introduced their Language wheresoever they seated themselves.

The *Normans* afterwards getting possession of *England* caused the *Norman* or *French* Tongue to be

learned at School by the *Saxons*; and for a long time, till 36 of *Edward* the Third, Laws, Statutes, Pleadings, Sermons, Schools, Writings, were in *French*.

The *Latin* Tongue at present is made use of in Court-Rolls, Records, Processes of Courts, in Charters, Commissions, Patents, Writs, Bonds, and some Statutes are still kept in that Language.

The Names of Shires, Cities, Towns and Villages, Places and Men in *England*, are generally *Saxon*; and so are most *Nouns Appellative*, and a great part of the *Verbs*.

In *French*, or rather *Norman*, are still written the Common Laws, and learnt by young Students thereof; all Reports, Pleadings, all Moots and Law Exercises, are wholly *French*; Declarations upon Original Writs, all Records are written in *French*; some old Statutes are still in that Tongue: In Parliament the Assent or Dissent to Bills, made by the King, Lords or Commons, is in *French*: Almost all our Terms in Hunting, Hawking, Dicing, Dancing, Singing, Heraldry, &c. are still *French*.

Character

The Natives of *England*, by reason of the temperate Climate, mild Air, plenty of wholsom Food; and the use of Beer rather than Wine, are commonly tall and big of

Stature, if compared with Southern Nations. They are fair, especially the Women, whose Beauties are lasting, Shapes fine, Mien agreeable, Air sweet and charming. Both Sexes are here well proportioned in Body, and graceful in Carriage: Grave, well-spoken, prudent, modest, free, sincere, pleasant, ingenious: The men are strong, couragious, warlike, (*Bellicosissimi*, saith *Bodin* the *French* Politician) resolute, enterprizing, constant, not knowing how to fly in Battel: Liberal to Prodigality, open-hearted, hard to be provoked, yet when exasperated, stomachful till satisfaction be given, and then they are easie to be reconciled: They are sumptuous and splendid, great lovers of Hospitality, magnanimous and beneficent, learned, sagacious, grateful: They are thought to be wanting in Industry, (excepting Mechanicks, wherein they are, of all Nations the greatest Improvers) Caution, Suspicion, Craft, Obsequiousness, and which is most of all to be deplored, Contentedness: but these Wants are supplied by many eminent Qualifications, as Dexterity, Sagacity, Eloquence, Fidelity, Friendship, Publick-spiritedness.

The Daringness of the Soldier, the Profoundness of the Scholar, the Magnificence of the Gentry, the Robustness of the Labourer, are not surpassed, if equalled by any People in the World.

The Women are tender, chaste, constant, prudent, loyal, industrious, passionately loving to their Relations, especially their Husbands and Children, even to Fondness: They are not without Vanity (particularly in Cloaths, being changeable in their Fashions and Furniture, which is sometimes prodigal) pretensions to Satyr, Raillery, and the like: But no Women out-do 'em in Modesty, Clemency, Simplicity, Patience, Charity, Providential Care, Temperance, Wit, good Humour, Cleanliness; and that which crowns all the rest, in the sincerity and zeal of Religious Devotion.

Good Nature is a qualification peculiar to the *English*, so peculiar, that as a noble Critick observes, there is no Word for it in any other Language.

The Inhabitants are generally of a warm and elevated Genius, of brisk and solid Parts, apprehensive and subtle; successful in finding out new Discoveries; but most of all in improving of old, especially, as I said, Mechanicks; there being but few Curiosities of Art brought over from beyond sea but are here improved to a greater height.

Here are the best Clocks, Watches, Locks, Barometers, Thermometers, &c. The late Queen had a Clock made by Mr. *Watson*, late of *Coventry*, worth a

thousand pounds, in which are all the Motions of the Celestial Bodies. Locks are here made of Iron and Brass, of fifty, nay a hundred pound a Lock. Watches so curious, that one part of the Movement of a Repeating Watch comes to ten pound, which makes them ordinarily fifty or sixty pound a Watch; and yet these prove profitable Merchandize when we send them to foreign Countries, so valuable and so inimitable is the Work. Curious Telescopes, Microscopes, Perspectives, Mirrors, Spheres, Globes, Charts, Maps, and all sorts of Mathematical Instruments, Dials, Ballances, Sea-Compasses, &c. Why should I mention the various Musical *Automata*, in which a very agreeable Consort is performed by Clock-Work? the late great Improvements in making Glass; of polishing the insides of great Iron Guns; of weighing up Ships that are sunk to the bottom of the Sea; in fishing, as they call it, for Money, lost it may be 100 years ago: And many other noble Inventions and Improvements; as weaving Silk-Stockings; Mills of all sorts, *Mortlack* Tapestry, Earthen Ware of *Fulham*, Speaking Trumpets, Air Pumps, making of Lustring, Engines for raising of Glass, spinning of Glass, cutting of Tobacco, printing Stuffs, Linnen, Paper; making Damask, Linnen, watering Silks; the way of separating Gold from Silver; Boulting

Mills, Lanthorns of divers sorts, Cane Chairs, making Horn-ware, &c.

The Natives will endure long and hard Labour, insomuch that after 12 hours hard work, they will go in the Evening to Foot-ball, Stool-ball, Cricket, Prison-base, Wrestling, Cudgel-playing, or some such like vehement Exercise, for their Recreation.

They are as long-liv'd generally as the People of any Nation in the World. A Man is not here accounted Old till 70, nor very Old till 80; and here are several who get their Livelihood by Handicraft Work at 100 and upwards. Not many years ago, 8 old Men danced a Morrice-Dance, all living in one Manour in the West of *England*, whose Ages put together made 800 years; and in the year 1635, dyed old *Parr*, aged 152, who lived in 10 Reigns. And in the year 1671 dyed *Henry Jenkins* of *Yorkshire*, aged 168 years. But such long Livers were born of healthy Parents, and lived temperate Lives, whereas on the other side by reason of intemperance, there is no part of the World wherein People are more subject to die suddenly.



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Present State

OF

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