STATISTICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE.

THE British Empire, exclusive of its foreign dependencies, consists of the islands of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the smaller islands contiguous and subordinate to them. Great Britain, the largest and by far the most important of the British Islands, is divided into the kingdoms of England and Scotland; the former occupying its southern, most fruitful and extensive, and the latter its northern, more barren, and smaller, portion. After the withdrawal of the Romans from Great Britain, these two divisions became separate and independent states, between which the most violent animosities frequently subsisted. In consequence of the marriage of Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. of England, to James IV. king of Scotland, in 1502, James VI. king of Scotland ascended the English throne, upon the demise of Queen Elizabeth, in 1604. But, notwithstanding this union of the crowns, the two kingdoms had distinct and independent legislatures till 1707, when, under the auspices of Queen Anne, a legislative union of England and Scotland was completed. In many respects, however, the institutions of the two countries still continue peculiar. The common law and the judicial establishments of Scotland differ much from those of England; the prevailing religion and the church establishment of the former are also materially different from those of the latter; and the manners and customs of the two countries, though gradually assimilating, still preserve many distinguishing features. For these reasons, in treating of the statistics of the British empire, we shall separate the details peculiar to the different branches of English statistics from those peculiar to the statistics of Scotland, without, however, treating the one as if it were entirely independent of the other.

Similar reasons have induced us to separate the statistical details peculiar to England and Scotland, from those peculiar to Ireland. Though now legally incorporated with Great Britain, the distinction between the latter and Ireland is far more decided than that between

England and Scotland. The insular situation of Ireland, removed to a considerable distance from Britain, gives her an indelible character of individuality. And though the English and their descendants have long had the ascendancy in Ireland, and English laws have been established there from a remote era, the Irish continue to be, in many respects, a peculiar people; so much so, that there is certainly less similarity between them and the English, than between the latter and the Scotch. The circumstance of the vast majority of the Irish being attached to the religion of Rome, while the English in Ireland profess the reformed faith, explains some of the apparently anomalous features in the condition of the Irish people; but, exclusive of this, a vast variety of circumstances, some of the more prominent of which will be mentioned in the course of this work, have contributed to form the distinctive and peculiar habits and character of the Irish.

The British Isles, exclusive of those of Orkney and Shetland, lie between the 50th and 59th degrees of north latitude; and between the 11th degree of west and the 2d degree of east longitude. They are, consequently, opposite to the northern coasts of France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the southern part of Norway. The south-east extremity of Great Britain is separated from France by the Straits of Dover — a narrow channel, only 21 miles wide; but, as the British coasts recede from this point in a north-westerly direction, while the opposite Continental shores recede to the north-east, the intervening sea is of pretty ample dimensions. Ireland lies to the west of Great Britain, from which it is separated by St. George's Channel and the Irish Sea; its southern and northern extremities being nearly in the same latitudes as Bristol and Alnwick.

The insular situation of Great Britain and Ireland is productive of many advantages;—it renders them comparatively secure from hostile attacks, at the same time that it affords every facility for commerce; and though it subjects the climate to sudden changes, it makes it really *temperate*, exempting us from those comparatively lengthened and violent extremes of heat and cold experienced in the continental countries under the same parallel of latitude.

The distance, in a direct line, from the Lizard Point, near Falmouth, in lat. 49° 57′ 30″ N., long. 5° 13′ W., the southernmost land in England, to Dunnet Head in Caithness, in lat. 58° 42′ N., long. 3° 29′ W., is 608 miles. But a considerable portion of this line is water, inasmuch as it passes through the Bristol Channel, the Irish Sea, and the Moray Frith. The longest line, not intersected by any considerable arm of the sea, that can be drawn in Great Britain, stretches from Rye in Sussex, in lat. 50° 57′ 1′ N., long. 0° 44′ E., to Cape Wrath in Sutherland, in lat. 58° 36′ N.,

long., 4° 56′ W.*, a distance of 580 miles. The longest line that can be drawn crosswise in Great Britain, is from the Land's End, in lat. 50° 4′ 8″ N., long. 5° 41′ 31″ W., to a point near Lowestoffe, on the coast of Norfolk, in lat. 52° 28½′ N., long. 1° 46′ E., a distance of 367 miles; but, in other places, the breadth from sea to sea is much less considerable, being sometimes under 40 miles.

The east coast of Great Britain, though marked by several prominences, of which the great triangular district terminating in Kinnaird's Head is by far the most conspicuous, is, on the whole, pretty regular; and were a straight line drawn from Dover to Duncansby Head, the land cut off from the main body of the island would not be far from equal to the water included. The western coast, on the contrary, is exceedingly irregular. The principal encroachment of the sea is between the coast of Galloway and the island of Anglesea and the coast of North Wales; but, exclusive of this great basin, the whole west of Scotland is deeply indented with large bays; while Cardigan Bay and the Bristol Channel deeply mark the coast of Wales and the south-west part of England. There are several admirable ports, and some considerable bays, though none of them is on a very large scale, on the south coast of England, between the Land's End and the South Foreland.

PART I.

EXTENT, PHYSICAL CIRCUMSTANCES, AND CIVIL DIVISIONS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I. — England and Wales.

Sect. 1. — *Name and Extent.*

Name.—The term England is derived from the Angles, or Anglo-Saxons, a German tribe or nation, supposed to have occupied in the sixth century the country between the Elbe and the Eyder. This tribe, following the example that had been set by other tribes of the same race, invaded South Britain in 547, about 140 years after the subversion of the Roman power, and about a century after the invasion of Britain by the Jutes, or Saxons of Jutland. The Angles first landed in Northumberland; but not long after they took possession of Norfolk; and being the most powerful or predominant of the Teutonic tribes established in this part of Britain, it received from

* This is the position given in the official account of the lighthouse on the Cape, published by the Commissioners of Northern Lights.

them the name of England, that is, the land or country of the English, or Angles.

There is more difficulty as to the term Wales. It was the name given by the Saxons to the principality to which it is still applied; and also to Devonshire and Cornwall, which were called West Wales. Etymologists differ as to the origin of the name. Sumner supposes that it is derived from the Saxon *weallen*, to wander; and that the Saxons meant by it to specify the countries to which they and the other German tribes compelled part of the Britons to resort, as fugitives and wanderers, from the richer and more level country to the eastward of the Severn and the Exe. — (*Campbell's Political Survey*, vol. ii. p. 310.)

Figure and Extent. — The figure of this grand division of Great Britain is triangular: the base of the triangle being formed by a line drawn from the South Foreland in Kent, to the Land's End in Cornwall; the eastern side, by a line drawn from Berwick to the South Foreland; and the western, or longest side, by a line drawn from Berwick to the Land's End. It is bounded on all sides by the sea, except on the north, where it unites with Scotland; from which it is separated partly by the river Tweed, and partly by a waving and not very well defined line drawn from near Coldstream to the bottom of the Solway Frith, in a south-westerly direction.

Geographers and writers on political arithmetic, have differed very widely in their estimates of the area of England and Wales. According to the most ancient and traditional opinion, they contained 29,000,000 statute acres. Dr. Beeke remarks, that this nearly coincides with the extent of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, and he believes that it may be traced back to that period. "Probably," says he, "it was not the result of any geographical inquiry, though the times in which I suppose it to have originated were by no means so incompetent to such an inquiry as may be imagined; but was a computation made from the returns to the royal treasury. The mode of levying the revenue of the Anglo-Saxon kings led to a more minute investigation of the extent and cultivation of their territory than has recently been attempted. The celebrated Domesday Book of the Norman conquerors was evidently formed on a more ancient register of the same kind, to which it continually refers." — (*Observations on the Income Tax*, 2d ed. p. 10.)

The admeasurement of the maps of the seventeenth century, inaccurate as they were, would have sufficed to prove that England and Wales contained more than 29,000,000 acres. It is singular, therefore, that Sir William Petty should have estimated their area at only 28,000,000 acres. Dr. Beeke thinks it probable that he may have calculated by 60 miles to a degree of latitude; and if so, his estimate

would nearly correspond with the area deducible from Morden's map, the best that was then published.

Gregory King estimated the area of England and Wales at 39,000,000 acres; but the first estimate to which much attention is due, is that framed by Dr. Halley. Taking the best maps then extant for the basis of his calculation, he found, measuring the counties separately, the entire area of England and Wales to amount to 39,938,500 acres. Unfortunately, however, the maps to which Dr. Halley was obliged to resort were very inaccurate, particularly as respected the southern counties. The operations connected with the Ordnance survey have shown that the distance between the South Foreland and the Land's End had been exaggerated by about half a degree! But for this extraordinary error, Dr. Halley's estimate would not have been very wide of the mark.

It is needless to specify in detail the various estimates given by Grew, Templeman, Arthur Young, and others; they vary from 31,648,000 to 46,916,000 acres! The last, which is the number given by Mr. Young, in his "Travels in France*," was adopted by Mr. Pitt, in his estimate of the probable product of the income tax; by Mr. Middleton, in his Survey of Middlesex; and by other authorities.

The first approach to a more correct computation was made by Dr. Beeke, in his elaborate tract on the income tax. Availing himself of later and more correct observations, by which the true distance between several of the principal points had been determined, he computed the area of England and Wales at 38,498,572 acres; but more recent investigations have shown that even this computation is about 1,400,000 acres too great. According to the results deduced from Arrowsmith's map, which, as it was principally founded on the Ordnance survey, could not involve any very material error, the area of England was set down, in the remarks prefixed to the census of 1821, at 50,535 square miles, and that of Wales at 7,425, making together 57,960: but in the late census, Mr. Rickman has reduced the area of England to 50,387 square miles.† It is, however, worthy of remark, that the area of the different counties, obtained by adding together the areas of the parishes and hundreds contained in each, as given in the Population Returns, does not correspond in any instance with their aggregate measurement. The area of England and Wales, as deduced from them, only amounts to 49,641 square miles, being 746 square miles less than the other. No attempt is made, in the official papers referred to, to explain this discrepancy. We subjoin —

* Vol. i. p. 296. Mr. Young had previously given a more accurate estimate in the second part of his "Political Arithmetic," p. 26.

† We believe it should be 50,380.

A TABLE

Exhibiting the Area of the Counties of England and Wales in Square Miles and Statute Acres, as deduced from the aggregate Measurement of each; the Acres in each, as deduced from the Particulars in the Population Returns for 1831; and the Fractional Part of the entire Area of England and Wales, supposing it to be represented by 1,000, contained in each County, according to its aggregate Measurement.

ENGLAND.				
Counties.	Square Miles, aggregate Measurement.	Statute Acres, aggregate Measurement.	Statute Acres, according to Details in Population Returns.	Part of the Area of England and Wales, supposing it to be 1,000, contained in each county, according to aggregate Measurement.
Bedford	463	296,320	297,632	8·008,718
Berks	752	481,280	472,270	13·007,680
Buckingham	738	472,320	463,820	12·765,516
Cambridge	857	548,480	536,853	14·823,912
Cheshire	1,052	673,280	649,050	18·196,914
Cornwall, excl. of Scilly Islands	1,330	851,200	849,200	23·005,604
Cumberland	1,523	974,720	969,490	26·344,012
Derby	1,028	657,920	663,180	17·781,775
Devon	2,585	1,654,400	1,636,450	44·713,900
Dorset	1,006	643,840	627,220	17.401,232
Durham	1,097	702,080	679,530	18·975,299
Essex	1,533	981,120	979,000	26·516,986
Gloucester	1,258	805,120	790,470	21·760,188
Hants	1,625	1,040,000	1,018,550	28·108,351
Hereford	863	552,320	543,800	14·927,697
Hertford	630	403,200	400,370	10·897,392
Huntingdon	372	238,080	241,690	6·434,650
Kent	1,557	996,480	972,240	26·932,125
Lancaster	1,766	1,130,240	1,117,260	30·547,291
Leicester	806	515,840	511,340	13·941,742
Lincoln	2,611	1,671,040	1,663,850	45·163,634
Middlesex	282	180,480	179,590	4·877,880
Monmouth	496	317,440	324,310	8·579,534
Norfolk	2,024	1,295,360	1,292,300	35·010,033
Northampton	1,016	650,240	646,810	17·574,206
Northumberland	1,871	1,197,440	1,165,430	32·363,523
Nottingham	837	535,680	525,800	14·477,963
Oxford	756	483,840	467,380	13·076,870
Rutland	149	95,360	97,500	2·577,320
Salop	1,343	859,520	864,360	23·230,471
Somerset	1,645	1,052,800	1,028,090	28·454,300
Stafford	1,184	757,760	736,290	20·480,177
Suffolk	1,515	969,600	918,760	26·205,632
Surrey	759	485,760	474,480	13·128,762
Sussex	1,466	938,240	907,920	25·358,057
Warwick	897	574,080	567,930	15·515,810
Westmoreland	762	487,680	485,990	13·180,655
Wilts	1,367	874,880	869,620	23·645,610
Worcester	723	462,720	459,710	12·506,054
Yorkshire	5,836	3,735,040	3,669,510	100·947,900
Fractional part not explained	7	4,480		121,082
Add for Scilly Islands			5,570	
Total of England	50,387	32,247,680	31,770,615	871·566,457

WALES.				
Counties.	Square Miles, aggregate Measurement.	Statute Acres, aggregate Measurement.	Statute Acres, according to Details in Population Returns.	Part of the Area of England and Wales, supposing it to be 1,000, contained in each County, according to aggregate Measurement.
Anglesey	271	173,440	No details given.	4·687,608
Brecknock	754	482,560		13·042,275
Cardigan	675	432,000		11·675,777
Caermarthen	974	623,360		16·847,713
Caernarvon	544	348,160		9·409,811
Denbigh	633	405,120		10·949,284
Flint	244	156,160		4·220,577
Glamorgan	792	506,880		13·699,578
Merioneth	663	424,320		11·468,207
Montgomery	839	536,960		14·512,558
Pembroke	610	390,400		10·551,443
Radnor	426	272,640		7·368,712
Total of Wales	7,425	4,752,000		128·433,543
Add Total of England as before	50,387	32,247,680	31,770,615	871·566,157
Total of England and Wales	57,812	36,999,680		1,000·000,000

SECT. 2.—*Face of the Country.*

Few countries exhibit a greater variety of surface than England, or have been more highly favoured by nature. "Although," says Dr. Aikin, "its features are moulded on a comparatively minute scale, they are marked with all the agreeable interchange which constitutes picturesque beauty. In some parts, plains clothed in the richest verdure, watered by copious streams, and pasturing innumerable cattle, extend as far as the eye can reach: in others, gently rising hills, and bending vales, fertile in corn, waving with woods, and interspersed with flowery meadows, offer the most delightful landscapes of rural opulence and beauty. Some tracts furnish prospects of the more romantic and impressive kind; lofty mountains, craggy rocks, deep dells, narrow ravines, and tumbling torrents: nor is there wanting as a contrast to those, scenes in which every variety of nature is a different charm, the vicissitude of black barren moors, and wide inanimated heaths."—(*England Described*, p. 1.) Such is a vivid description of the general appearance of England. But the beauty and fertility of the country are not the only things to excite admiration: the mildness of the climate, removed alike from the extremes of heat and cold; the multitude of rivers, their depth, and the facility they afford to internal navigation; the vast beds of coal and other valuable minerals hid under the surface; the abundance and excellence of the fish in the rivers

and surrounding seas; the extent of sea-coast; the number, capaciousness, and safety of the ports and bays; and the favourable situation of the country for commerce; give England advantages that are not enjoyed in an equal degree by any other nation. The noble panegyric of Pliny on Italy, is, in most respects, still more applicable to England:—"Ergo in toto orbe et quacunque cœli convexitas vergit, pulcherrima est omnium regio, rebusque merito principatum naturæ obtinens, rectrix parensque mundi altera; viris, fœminis, ducibus, militibus, servitiis, artium præstantia, ingeniorum claritatibus, jam situ ac salubritate cœli atque temperie, accessu cunctarum gentium facili, littoribus portuosis, benigno ventorum afflatu, aquarum copia, nemorum salubritate, montium articulis, ferorum animalium innocentia, soli fertilitate, pabuli ubertate. Quicquid est quo carere vita non debeat, nusquam est præstantius."—(*Hist. Nat.* lib. xxxvii. cap. 13.)

No one will expect to find, in a work of this sort, either a full description of the country, or minute topographical details. It is impossible, however, to form any just notion of its actual *state and resources*, without having a general acquaintance with its physical as well as with its moral and political condition.

The face or appearance of a country may be variously described. Some geographers commence their descriptions by giving an account of the rivers, and of the basins, or tracts of country, drained by each. But though this method has some advantages, we incline to think that the best and most natural order is to begin with the description of the mountains; proceeding successively to describe the vales, the rivers and lakes, and the sea-coasts and harbours: having done this, we shall lay before the reader, accounts of the geology of the country, and of its climate, botany, and zoology. It is hoped that the reader may, in this way, acquire sufficiently distinct ideas with respect to the natural powers and capacities of the empire.

Sect. 3.—*Mountains and Moorlands.*

Though the mountains of England are but of very inferior dimensions, compared with those of some of the Continental states, they form a prominent and distinguishing feature in its physiognomy. We shall include under this head a brief notice of the principal hills and moorlands; meaning by the latter, the principal elevated tracts of heathy or moorish ground.

A chain of mountains or hills extends, with but few interruptions, along the whole western side of the kingdom, from Cumberland to the Land's End. It is of very various breadth and elevation. In some places it approaches quite to the west coast; occasionally sending off

large spurs or arms to the east. Assuming the summit of this great chain to form the natural division between the eastern and western sides of the kingdom, the former is by far the largest, richest, and most important. The western side is not, however, without many considerable tracts of rich, fertile, level land; but they are very inferior, in extent and value, as compared with the others.

Most of the rivers of England have their sources in this grand chain. Wth the exception, indeed, of the Severn, which principally follows a southerly course, and of the Eden, which flows north-west, all of them that are of any considerable magnitude flow eastward; the limited territory traversed by those that run westward not allowing them space to attain a lengthened course, or to carry off a large body of water.

The great longitudinal chain has been divided into three portions, respectively denominated the Northern, Cambrian, and Devonian ranges. The first, taken in its utmost extent, stretches from the Scottish border to the middle of Derbyshire: it enters England at Carter Fell, near the north-eastern extremity of Cumberland; and stretches southwards in a pretty direct line till it is interrupted by the valley of the Ribble, Craven, and the valley of the Aire. This part of the chain lies partly in Cumberland, partly in Westmoreland, partly in Northumberland, and partly in Durham and Yorkshire: its summit ridge separates the waters of the North Tyne, South Tyne, Tees, Swale, Ure, and Wharfe, flowing eastward, from those of the Irthing, Eden, Lowther, Lune, and Ribble, flowing westward. Its elevation varies from 1,200 to near 3,000 feet: the highest summits are Cross Fell, near the sources of the South Tyne and the Tees, in the western part of Cumberland, 2,901 feet high; Shunnor Fell, in which the Eden and the Swale have their sources, on the confines of Yorkshire and Westmoreland, 2,329 feet high; and Whernside, Ingleborough, and Pennigant, respectively 2,384, 2,368, and 2,270 feet high, in the westernmost parts of Yorkshire, contiguous to the sources of the Ribble and the Wharfe.

An important portion of the northern range lies to the westward of that connected central ridge here noticed, being separated from it by the valley of the Eden and the Vale of Kendal. This portion stretches lengthwise from near Ireby, in Cumberland, to Ulverston in Lancashire; and from Lowther Water, across to Dent Hill, near St. Bee's Head. Some of the summits in this group are the highest of any in England. The most elevated are those of Scaw Fell, Helvellyn, Skiddaw, and Bow Fell, in Cumberland, respectively 3,166, 3,055, 3,022, and 2,901 feet above the level of the sea. Scaw Fell has two principal summits, separated from each other by a deep chasm, the one being 66 feet higher than the other. Helvellyn is in most

parts extremely rugged and precipitous: in point of mass, it far exceeds almost any other of the Cumbrian mountains: it is, however, closely hemmed round by others; while Skiddaw, though of inferior dimensions, being comparatively detached, appears to much greater advantage, and may be seen nearly on every side in its entire elevation. Exclusive of the above, the Nine Pins, in Westmoreland, rise 2,136 feet above the level of the sea; and Coniston Fell, in Lancashire, 2,577 feet.

The mountains in the central range extend in some places to a great width; insensibly shelving down and uniting, on the eastern side, with the Cheviot hills, and the moors of Northumberland, Durham, and West Yorkshire. They are in general rounded and tame, and are mostly covered with peat earth and heath, having a dreary, bleak, desolate aspect. But those in the western group are generally steep, bold, and rugged; in their disposition there is little of regularity, no lengthened ridge or continuous chain; their appearance is that of a congeries of immense broken and mostly angular masses, having their bases united, or nearly so, except where they are separated by lakes. The western mountains, unlike those of the eastern ridge, are mostly covered with a fine green sward, affording excellent pasture for sheep: Skiddaw, however, is partially clothed with heath.

The varied forms of these mountains, ornamented in parts with wood, and the picturesque beauties of the numerous lakes scattered amongst them, form a *tout ensemble* of very attractive scenery. These mountains are seen to the greatest advantage on the road from Kirby Lonsdale, by Kendal, to Shap.

Besides slate and limestone, of which, indeed, the mountains in this part of the northern range are mostly composed, they furnish considerable supplies of coal, lead, and of the rare mineral plumbago, or black lead; this is obtained from a mine in Borrowdale, in Cumberland, of a finer quality than any hitherto discovered in any other part of the world.

The Cheviot hills unite with the north-eastern confines of the great central range now described. They are situated partly in Scotland, and partly in Northumberland: that part of them which is in the latter, occupies the space between the Scottish border on the north-west, and the upper part of the river Coquet on the south, round by Prendwick, Ilderton, Wooler, and Kirknewton, to Mindrim; including an area of from 90,000 to 100,000 acres. Several of these hills have a conical figure, some being nearly perfect cones; while the shape of others is very irregular: in general, however, they are pointed, their sides smooth and rapidly sloping, and their bases separated by deep narrow glens. Except at their very