

**THE COMPETITIVE
GEOGRAPHY OF
THE BRITISH ISLES**

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The Competitive Geography of the British Isles by R. Johnston

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R. JOHNSTON

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OF
THE BRITISH ISLES.

BY
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PREFACE.

THOUGH this treatise is specially intended for candidates who purpose presenting themselves at the competitive examinations in which the geography of the British Isles is one of the prescribed subjects, it is hoped that it will also be found suitable for the more advanced classes in schools and colleges where geography is one of the subjects taught. In its preparation many treatises on the same subject have been consulted, but more particularly the latest editions of our standard encyclopædias ; and care has been taken to give an accurate account of our great manufacturing towns and other important industrial centres. Many of these have been visited by the author and have been described more from local information than from reference to books.

The census returns have been used in the tabular statements of the populations of the counties and borough towns.

For some unaccountable reason, the Irish census—unlike the valuable English summary, or the

carefully compiled Scotch return—is a miserable production, not even giving a list of the borough towns, many of which, such as Clonmel and Wexford, would be considered in every country in the world, save Ireland, of sufficient importance for a place in a census summary.

The forbearance of many readers is solicited on the grounds, that in giving some 2,000 separate articles, however short each may be, many slight inaccuracies must necessarily exist.

It should be mentioned that this treatise forms only a portion of a work on the geography of the whole world, which will shortly be ready.

2nd October, 1871.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THE UNITED KINGDOM consists of Great Britain, Ireland, and the numerous islands around the coast, being separated from the Continent of Europe by the North Sea and British Channel. The distance from Dover to Cape *Grisnez* on the opposite coast of France is only 19 miles; from the coast of Norfolk to Holland about 90 miles; and from Peterhead to the *Naze* in Norway about 300 miles. The most northerly point is one of the Shetland Isles, latitude $60^{\circ} 49'$; the most southerly, the Scilly Isles, latitude $49^{\circ} 53'$; the most easterly, Lowestoft Ness, in Suffolk, longitude $1^{\circ} 46'$ E.; the most westerly, one of the Blasquet Isles off the coast of Kerry, $10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ west.

These islands constitute by far the most commercial, most enterprising, most wealthy, and most civilized empire in the world. Our flag floats in every sea, bearing to the most distant lands the productions of our "sons of toil," and returning with the bounteous products with which nature has crowned more sunny climes. The surrounding seas give us not only security from a foreign enemy, but moderate our climate, afford an important source of industry to many of those who live near the coast in supplying fish to the great towns, and form a great highway, so necessary for an eminently commercial nation. Owing to our climate being mild, our soil fertile and productive, our harbours commodious and spacious, our rivers navigable, our canals and railways numerous and admirably constructed, we have a country especially suited for the habitation of an enterprising, and, above all, a commercial people. Our minerals

are superior to those of any other country; abundance of coal* and iron, tin and lead, silver and copper, is found.

The industrial occupations of the people of the British Isles are more varied and valuable than those of any other European state.

Agriculture is the prevailing industry. It is computed four-fifths of England is arable land, three-fourths of Ireland and Wales, and one-third of Scotland.

Every year we largely import bread stuffs from America, South Russia, North Germany, and other places.

Of our three great *manufactures*, cotton, wool, and iron, we import the raw material of the first two:—cotton from the United States, Egypt, India, and Brazil; wool from Australia, Cape Colony, Spain, Germany. Most of our iron is obtained from the three great seats, Merthyr Tydvil, Wolverhampton, and Rotherham.

There is neither beginning nor end to our *Commerce*. It is usually divided into the *Home* and *Foreign* trade—the former consisting in transporting the products of one portion of the United Kingdom to another; for instance, the cattle and provisions of Connaught are sent to Birmingham, and the pots and other iron ware from the latter place to the former. In the Foreign trade, of which the greater part is with our colonies, our flag floats on every sea.

There is a tendency of the population to constant shifting, and gradually to become concentrated in those districts where manufacturing, mining, or mercantile industries, are most actively carried on. Agricultural industry does not tend so much to increase the population in particular districts; but where any two or more of the above-mentioned industries flourish in a particular district, an extraordinary increase of population takes place. Thus, while, during the last ten years, many towns in agricultural districts have remained stationary in population, and some even have retrograded, we find towns in the coal and iron districts with

* Coal constitutes our most important mineral wealth, affording an inexhaustible supply of fuel, and steam-power without limit.

an enormous increase—some have even doubled the population of 1861. With an increase of one industry there must inevitably be a corresponding increase in one or more others. Thus, nothing has conduced so much to stimulate and increase our commerce as the enormous growth of our manufactures.

The population of the British Isles in 1871 is given below; the area is about 122,000 square miles.

United Kingdom.	Population, 1871.	Area in Acres.
ENGLAND, - -	21,487,688	32,590,397
WALES, - -	1,216,420	4,734,486
SCOTLAND, - -	3,358,613	19,638,377
IRELAND, - -	5,402,759	20,322,641
ISLE OF MAN, -	53,867	180,000
CHANNEL ISLES, -	90,563	46,684
ARMY, NAVY, & SEAMEN ABROAD,	} 207,198	
Total, -	31,817,108	77,512,585

The Census Commissioners state there is an increase of 705 persons daily; and as the Census was taken on 2nd April, 1871, it is easy, on this reliable basis, to tell, with sufficient accuracy, the population at any date within the next few years. We have followed in the arrangement of the counties very nearly that adopted by the Census Commissioners.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

ENGLAND AND WALES together are often called South Britain. They differ materially in their physical features; the former being rather flat, and the latter mountainous and hilly. In consequence of England being more rich in minerals it has much larger towns than Wales; in the latter, from its industry being almost exclusively agricultural, only small towns are found, the only exception being in the county

of Glamorgan, which, in its coal and iron works, successfully rivals similar industrial districts in England.

This country is bounded on the N. by the river Tweed, Cheviot hills, and Solway Frith; on the E. by the North Sea; on the S. by the English Channel; and W. by the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel.

The most eastern point of England is Lowestoft Ness, longitude $1^{\circ} 46'$ E.; the most southern is the Lizard, latitude $49^{\circ} 58'$; the most western point, is Land's End, longitude $5^{\circ} 45'$ W., the most northern point is a little north of Berwick, latitude $55^{\circ} 50'$ N.

Capes and Headlands.—On the E. *Flamborough* and *Spurn* heads, *Lowestoftness*, the *Naze*, *Foulness*, *Shoeburyness*, North and South *Foreland*. On the S., *Dungeness*, *Beachy* head, *Selsea* Bill, the *Needles*, *St. Alban's* head, *Portland* Bill, *Start* point, *Lizard* head, *Land's End*. On the W., *Hartland* point, the *Foreland* (in Devon), *Worms* head, *St. David's* head, *Braichy-Pull*, *Great Ormes* head, and *St. Bee's* head.

Bays and Harbours.—On the E., *Bridlington* bay, *mouth of the Humber*, the *Wash*, and *mouth of the Thames*. On the S., *Rye* bay, *Spithead*, *Southampton* water, the *Solent*, *Poole*, *Lyme*, and *Tor* bays, *Plymouth* sound, *Falmouth* and *Mounts* bays. On the W., *St. Ives*, *Barnstaple*, *Bridgwater*, *Swansea* and *Carmarthen* bays, *Milford* haven, *St. Bride's*, *Cardigan*, *Carnarvon*, *Holghead*, and *Beaumaris* bays, mouths of the *Dee*, *Mersey*, and *Ribble*, *Morecambe* bay, and the *Solway Frith*.

Islands.—On the E. are *Coquet*, *Holy*, and *Farne* Islands, E. of Northumberland; *Foulness* and *Sheerness* isles at the mouth of the Thames; the *Isle of Wight* and *Channel Isles*, in the English Channel; on the W. are the *Scilly Isles*, *Lundy*, *Ramsey*, *Bardsey*, *Holy Island*, *Anglesea*, *Walney*, and the *Isle of Man*.

The following table gives the counties of England and Wales, with the area, population, and capital town of each :—