

V. Part of a Letter from the Reverend Mr. Hugh Jones to the Reverend Dr. Benjamin Woodroffe, F. R. S. concerning several Observables in Maryland.

Honoured Sir,

AS for this Country which you desire me to send you an account of, the following Particulars, I hope, will give you an Idea thereof, and of our way of Living. *Chesepack-Bay* which runs North and by West about two hundred Miles or more, divides this Province, as well as *Virginia*, into two parts, which we call the Eastern and Western Shores. The whole Province contains Eleven Counties, Six on our side, which is the Western, and Five on the Eastern Shore. The Land is generally Low on both sides. No Hill that I have seen or heard of among the Inhabitants fifty Yards Perpendicular; but about one hundred Miles back, or West of us, towards the Heads of Rivers the Ground rises and appears in very high Mountains, and rocky Precipices, running North and South, from the top of which a Man may have a clear Prospect of *Virginia* and *Maryland*. All the low Land is very woody, like one continued Forrest, no part clear but what is cleared by the *English*. And tho we are Pretty closely seated, yet we cannot see our next Neighbours House for Trees. Indeed in few years we may expect it otherwise, for the Tobacco-Trade destroys abundance of Timber, both for making of Hogsheds, and building of Tobacco-Houses; besides clearing of Ground yearly for Planting. Our Soil is generally Sandy, free from Stone, which makes it very

very convenient for Travelling; and we have no occasion for Shoöing our Horses, except in frosty Weather. And what with the goodness of our little Horses, and the smoothness of the Roads, we can travel upon occasion fifty Miles in a Summers Afternoon, and sometimes a hundred Miles in a Day: indeed our Miles are not counted so long as in *England*. As for the natural Situation of the Country, the number of Navigable Rivers, Creeks, Inlets, render it so Convenient for Exporting, and Importing Goods into any part thereof, by Water Carriage, that no Country can compare with it. The rich and plentiful Gifts of Nature likewise add to the Happiness of the Place; the Three Elements affording plenty of Food for the use of Man, *viz.* Deer, Fowle, both Water and Land, in abundance: and for the preserving of Health many excellent Herbs and Roots, the discovery of whose Vertues we owe chiefly to the *Indians*. As for the natural Product of the Country, we have for Timber, several sorts of Oak, *viz.* The Red, White, Black, Chesnut, Water, Spanish, and Line Oaks; which last bears a Leaf like a Willow. We have Cedar White and Red; the Red serves only for Posts and Groundsils, the White to rive or split into Boards, that being the freest from Knots, and goes under the name of Cypress, but I think falsely.

Here is a Tree we call Cypress, which is extraordinary large in Bulk, and bears a Leaf like the Sensitive Plant, it is soft and spongy, will not Rive, and is fit for no use. We have Black Walnut, which is mightily esteemed by the Joyners for its Grain and Colour. Here is a sort of Poplar that makes good White Plank, it is a large Tree, and bears a Flower like a Tulip. We have also plenty of Pine, and Dog-wood, which is a fine Flower-bearing-Tree. *Sassafras,*

safras, *Locust*, a Tree of very quick growth, and very durable in Building. Hickery, of which he have two sorts, Red and White, this serves chiefly for fire Wood, being the best for that use. We have also plenty of Chestnuts and Chinquapine another Species of Chestnut; and a sort of Elm like a *Dutch Elm*, which we call the Sugar-Tree, from the sweetness of its Juice, with which some have made good Sugar. Here is also a sort of Elder, whose Bark is closely guarded with Prickles like those of a Briar. Tulip-bearing-Laurel, and Myrtle of several sorts; one whereof bears a Berry with which they make in the Eastern Shore green Wax, very proper to make Candles if mixed with Tallow.

Among the Inhabitants of the Air, which are very numerous. The humming Bird is the most curious, they continue with us all Summer, feeding only upon Flowers like Bees. The mocking Bird, for various Notes, exceeds all the Birds, I believe, in the World; but it is hard to raise one, by reason of the hardness of the Winter that Kills them in their Cages: it is a very tender Bird, and requires a great deal of Attendance, and the Seamen will not give it them, else I had sent your Son one before now, pursuant to his request. Of all our Reptiles, the Rattle-Snake is the most noted; and what is commonly reported of its charming Birds, and Squirrels, &c. is not groundless, for it hath been affirmed to me by several Eye Witnesses. As for the Nature of the Clime, the Air is now more wholesome than formerly, which I suppose proceeds from the opening of the Country, that giving the Air a freer motion. Our Summers are not extreme hot, as in the first seating; and our Winters are generally severe towards what they are in *England*. The North-West Wind is very sharp in Winter, and even in the heat

heat of Summer it mightily cools the Air; and too often at that time a sudden North-Western strikes our Labourers into a Fever, when they are not careful to provide for it, and put on their Garments while they are at Work. We have little or no Woollen or Linnen Manufacture followed by any of us (except what is done in *Somerset* County over the Bay) because we are yearly supplied from *England* with necessaries: but Tobacco is our Meat, Drink, Cloathing and Monies; not but that we have Money both *Spanish* and *English* pretty plenty, which serves only for Pocket Expences, and not for Trade; Tobacco being the Standard for Trade, not only with the Merchants, but also among our selves.

It were too tedious to relate the way and manner of making Tobacco, which is a Commodity so vendible, especially these last seven years past, that thousands have got good Estates by it. Most of our Planters when they began this sort of Husbandry had not wherewithal to Cloath themselves, whereof several now are worth thousands of Pounds. Indeed this Country hath been chiefly seated by Poor People, whose Industry hath raised them to great Estates. Our common Drink is Syder, which is very good, and where it is rightly ordered not inferior to the best White-Wine. We have Wine brought us from *Madera* and *Fayal*, Rum from *Barbadoes*; Beer, Mault, and Wines from *England*. We have plenty of good Grapes growing wild in the Woods, but there is no Improvement made of them. And now Sir, to touch a little upon that which chiefly under God Advances our welfare, *viz.* Our Government; we are governed by the same Laws as in *England*, only some Acts of Assembly we have relating to some particular Cases not under the Verge of the *English* Laws; or where the Laws of *England* do

not so aptly provide for some Circumstances under which our way of living hath put us.

The Church of *England*, God be praised, is pretty firmly Established among us. Churches are built and there is an Annual Stipend allow'd to every Minister by a perpetual Law, which is more or less according to the number of Taxables in each Parish, every Christian Male above Sixteen years old, and *Negroes* Male and Female above that Age pay forty Pound of Tobacco to the Minister, which is Levied by the Sheriff among other Publick Levies, which makes the Revenues of the Ministers, one with another, about twenty thousand Pound of Tobacco, or one hundred Pound Sterling *per ann.* It hath been the unhappines of this Country that they have had no Protestant Ministers hardly among them till Governour *Nicholson's* time (who has been a great Promoter and Encourager of the Clergy) but now and then an Itinerant Preacher of very loose Morals, and scandalous Behaviour; so that what with such Mens ill Examples, the *Roman* Priests cunning, and the Quakers Bigotry, Religion was in a manner turned out of Doors. But God be praised things now stand better, and our Churches are crowded as full as they can hold, and the People are pretty sensible of the *Roman* Superstition, and the Quakers Madness; so that their Parties both joyned together are very inconsiderable to what ours is. Indeed the Quakers struggle hard to maintain their footing, and their Teachers (especially the Female Sex, who are the most zealous) are very free of their Taunts, and Contumelies against us, but it is to little purpose, unless to make their own way more ridiculous and odious. As for our part, I think we take the most effectual Method, under God, to stop their spreading, *viz.* By not minding them, for I believe that to oppose a Heresie by Disputes

Disputes and Declamations is the ready way to increase it. And I find the more they Condemn our Church, Rail and Scoff at the Clergy, the fewer Profelytes they Gain. And I do not doubt, if it please God, but in few years the Church will have not many to oppose it, especially of Quakers. We have not yet found the way of Associating our selves in Towns and Corporations, by reason of the fewness of Handicrafts-Men; and we have no Trade at Home or Abroad, but that of Tobacco: There are indeed several places allotted for Towns; but hitherto they are only Titular ones, except *Annapolis* where the Governour Resides. Governour *Nicholson* hath done his endeavour to make a Town of that: there are in it about forty Dwelling Houses, Seven or Eight whereof can afford good Lodging and Accommodations for Strangers. There is also a State-House, and a Free-School built with Brick, which make a great shew among a parcel of wooden Houses, and the Foundation of a Church laid, the only Brick Church in *Maryland*. They have two Market-days in the Week, and had Governour *Nicholson* continued there some years longer, he had brought it to some perfection.

As for our Predecessors the *Indians*, I cannot give you at present any further account of them than this, *viz.* That whereas at the first Seating of *Maryland* there were several Nations of *Indians* in the Country, governed by several petty Kings; Now I do not think that there are Five hundred fighting Men of them in the Province, and those are most on the Eastern Shore, where they have two or three little Towns: some of them come over to our side in Winter time to Hunt for *Deer*, being generally Employed by the *English*, they take delight in nothing else; and it is rare that any of them will imbrace our way of Living or Worship.

The Cause of their diminishing proceeded not from any Wars with the *English*, for we have had none with them; but from their own perpetual Discords and Wars among themselves, as being a scattered People under several Heads, and always at variance one with another. The Female Sex also have swept away a great many, so that now they are dwindled almost to nothing. One thing is observable in them, tho they are a People very timorous and cowardly in Fight, yet when taken Prisoners and Condemned, they dye like Heroes, braving the most Exquisite Tortures that can be invented, and singing all the time they are upon the Rack.

Now, Sir, Lest I should trespass too much upon your Patience, I will put a Stop to this imperfect and desultory Discourse, hoping you will generously pardon all the Faults and Mistakes of

Sir,

Your much Obliged

and very humble Servant,

Hugh Jones.

Maryland,
Jan. 23. 1698.