

That part called the South-hams is famous for its noble rough cyder : In other parts of it mines of tin have been formerly discovered in such abundance, that in king John's time the coinage of Devonshire was set to farm for 100*l.* a year, when Cornwall paid but 66*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* and it has four stannary towns, with as many stannary courts, and towns of coinage ; which are Plympton, Tavistock, Ashburton, and Chagford ; but there is very little tin dug in this county now.

Veins of loadstone are found here, which, I was told, a learned naturalist says generally run east and west, contrary to the received opinion, that the loadstone gave a northerly direction ; because its natural position in the mine is supposed to be north and south. Here are quarries of good stone for building, and also of slate for covering houses ; and of the latter great quantities are exported.

Proceeding still eastward, we entered the pleasant and fruitful county of Dorset, or Dorsetshire, which not only produceth great plenty of corn, pasture, cattle, wild fowl and fish, but hemp and flax ; and great quantities of cloth are made here, both woollen and linen. Nor can any shire match its plenty of excellent stone in the quarries at Portland and Purbeck (in the last of which marble has been dug up sometimes ; ) and from Blacknore Forest may be brought sufficient timber to serve the whole county : And what a conveniency this is to the inhabitants, appears, from the elegance of the buildings, not only of the gentlemen's seats, but in their towns. Many kinds of earth, that are useful, are dispersed up and down the county : particularly, the best tobacco pipe-clay, which, as I was told, would sell at London for 30*s.* a ton.

From hence we travelled into Somersetshire, so called from its being the warmest county in the whole island of Britain. It is a very rich, plentiful, populous and pleasant county, famous among the graziers for its large sheep and oxen ; and among merchant adventurers, for its commodious havens. But the roads in winter are very foul and bad for travellers.

It abounds with grain of all kinds, of which it supplies home and foreign markets with vast quantities. Its hills afford mines of coal, lead, and copper. Wood thrives here, as well as in any shire in the kingdom ; and teasles (a sort of thistles used by the cloth-dressers) grow scarce any where else. Ocre is dug up, on and about Mendip hills ; and of lapis calaminaris (without which, and copper, there is no making of brass) more is dug up here than in all the kingdom besides. As this county is rich in pasture, no wonder it yields such great quantities of cheese, of which the best and biggest in England are made at Cheddar, and reckoned as good as Parmesan ; and it is worthy both the observation and imitation of such as desire to excel in this branch of trade, that the whole milk of the parish is, by the agreement of the parishioners, preserved for the making of it. Its oxen are as large as those of Lancashire and Lincolnshire ; and the grain of the flesh is said to be finer. Its vales feed and fatten a prodigious number of sheep, and of the largest size. Its mastiff dogs are the boldest of all others of the kind at baiting the bull, a sport in which the ruder sort of people among them, and some of the low-bred gentry, take perhaps too much delight, as well here, as in other parts of this nation.

All sorts of cloth is manufactured here : as broad and narrow kerseys, druggets, serges, duroys and shalloons, together with stockings and buttons ; and in the south-east parts of the shire are made great quantities of linen. The value of the woollen manufacture alone here, in the first hands, has been rated at a million a year ; and if a calculation was made of its other manufactures, and its produce by mines, tillage, feeding, grazing, dairies, &c. it would undoubtedly exceed any county of the kingdom in riches, both natural and acquired, Yorkshire not excepted ; due allowance being made