

hills feed cattle, sheep, and goats, while the vallies produce plenty of grass and corn, especially the latter, of which here is as good wheat as in any county of the kingdom, and yet lands never sell for more than twenty-one years purchase. The Bristol merchants send their ships hither to take off great quantities of its corn for Portugal and other countries. Coals are so cheap here, that it is common to see a good fire in the meanest cottage: for a horse load cost but 2d. at the mouth of the pit.

The principal manufacture of the county is flannel. The gentlemen here generally speak English, though the current language of the vulgar is Welsh. The natives were formerly reckoned a valiant and courageous people, and the most skilful archers of all the Welsh borderers; yet they were cruelly harassed after the Normans came into England by the lords of the marshes, to whom several of the English kings granted all they could conquer here for their own.

Our next route was into Herefordshire, which, they say, has also been a Welsh county; and its prodigious quantities of orchards and fruit trees, the very hedges being full of them, have obtained to this county the agreeable name of the Orchard of England. This county abounds with all things necessary for life; but more especially with corn, wool, salmon, and cyder; and its wool and cyder is generally counted the best in England, yet this cyder, so much admired, is made of the red-streak-apple, which is scarce eatable; and grows no where so well as in this county.

After a short stay we arrived in Worcestershire, whose air and soil are so kindly, that it is inferior to none of its neighbours, either for health or pleasure, the former being sweet all over the county, the latter rich both in tillage and pasturage, the hills being covered with flocks of sheep, and the vallies abounding in corn and rich meadows. Neither is it less happily accommodated with water; for it has in all parts very fine rivers, as the Severn, Stour, Avon, Teme, &c. which furnish it plentifully with fish of the most delicious kinds. The noble Severn directs the course of its rich stream from north to south through the very middle of the county; and the Avon from Warwickshire runs into that river through the south part of the shire. Its commodities, besides corn, cattle, cheese, wool, cloth, stuffs, cyder, lampreys, &c. are perry and salt, and the latter such in a peculiar manner. Its perry is made of pears, and the best kind of it is very palatable, especially if it be three or four years old, when it is racy and spirituous. Hops are lately much cultivated in this shire, which commodity, and their salt, are sent down the Severn in a sort of vessels called troughs, of which at least twenty are constantly employed to Bristol, Bridgewater, and other places, Somersetshire and Dorsetshire being chiefly supplied with the latter by this traffic.

Still returning to the north-east we entered Warwickshire, whose air is excellent, the soil rich, and its principal commodities are corn, malt, wool, wood, iron, coal, and cheese.

'Tis divided into two parts, the Felden, and the Woodland; that on the south side, and this on the north side of the Avon; by which it is certain, that as the former was a champaign, the other was a woody country. The first afforded all the pasture, and corn grounds; and the second was of little use, besides fuel; but the iron works, in the adjacent counties, have so consumed the wood, that they have long since made way for the plough; and at present, what by marle, and other good contrivances, all this part yields abundance of corn; so that the Felden, which used to supply the other with corn, cheese, and butter, is now turned, in a great measure, into pasturing. The soil of both is good, and produces excellent corn and cheese, especially the latter, which has so much the preference, that the very name of it given to that of other counties, which is not so good, is enough to carry it off.